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THE Nation.

MAY 26, 2008
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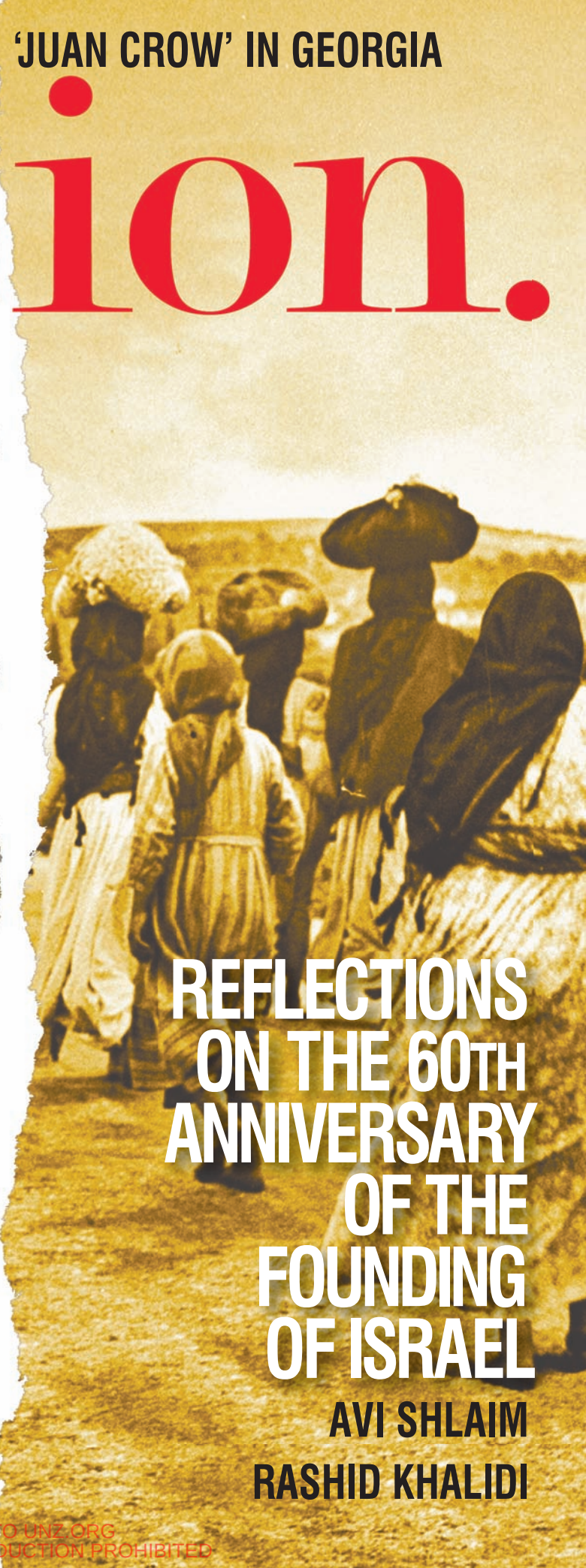

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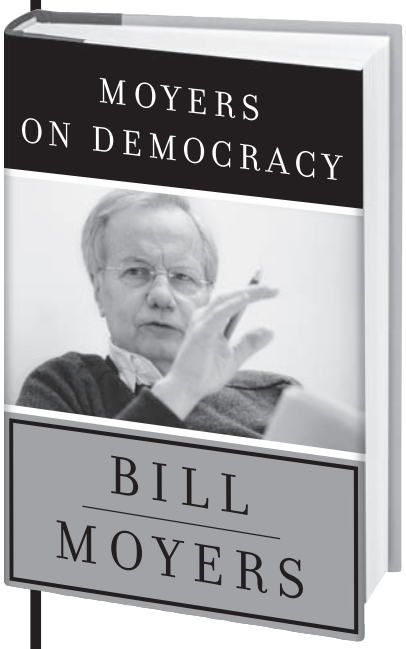

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Letters

Tain't Funny, McGee

Madison, Wis.
I could not believe my eyes when I saw the April 28 "Comix Nation," depicting Ronald Reagan and Charlton Heston in "Lost Marbles Valley." It is impossible to understand why Rick Meyerowitz thought this the least bit comic. It is even more impossible to understand why *The Nation* published such a thoughtless and cruel cartoon. Shame on you!
Hiasaura Rubenstein

South Dennis, Mass.
Rick Meyerowitz's "Comix Nation" was beyond the pale. There are people with Alzheimer's disease and people who care for them who are without hope. I lost a friend to Alzheimer's three months ago, and he is not in "Lost Marbles Valley." He is finally at peace. You let your ideology run away with you.
Ethel Hayes

Morrisville, Pa.
Has *The Nation* lost its humanitarian marbles? Rick Meyerowitz's cartoon making fun of two men who had Alzheimer's is more than offensive. Sure, their policies were regressive, but Reagan and Heston, and all who end their lives with this terrible disease, deserve compassion.
Gloria del Vecchio

Honolulu
You will probably get flak for the cartoon showing two right-wing icons in "Lost Marbles Valley," but they both deserved it. Reagan gave us Iran/*contra*, a huge deficit and foxes guarding henhouses. He fired the air-traffic controllers and dumped mental patients on the streets to become homeless. He had a record 125 failed appointees. He fought the University of California, and Ed Meese dropped tear gas on Berkeley. Reagan was a mentor to the governor who killed the protesters at Kent State. Charlton Heston, as National Rifle Association president, went to Columbine to promote guns after the high school shootings. They were powerful, harmful actors.
Nancy Bey Little

letters@thenation.com

Meyerowitz Replies

New York City
My drawing was *meant* to be mean, inappropriate and out of line, and it did attack Ronald Reagan and Charlton Heston for being senile instead of the things they are usually attacked for. It was the visual equivalent of a Bronx cheer, and I'm a Bronx boy, born and bred. My drawings are provocative. Some find them hilarious; others, insulting. Usually they're both. Someone will always be offended by something. If I worried about who I'd offend, I'd never do anything (I can hear the cheers).

My father had Alzheimer's, and I was his main caregiver for twelve years. I visited him daily. His name was Hy. I made a sign for above his bed at Village Nursing Home near the end of his life. The sign said, World's Only Known Victim of ALZHYMIE's Disease. The nursing staff and the doctors loved it. And they loved him the more because of the love they saw him get from me and my brothers. He would've laughed at the sign too if he hadn't forgotten how to read. I get my sense of humor from my father. In our family we poke fun at things that need poking. If we didn't laugh, we'd lose our marbles.
Rick Meyerowitz

Hawai'i—50th State of Mind

Hilo, Hawai'i
Elinor Langer's "Famous Are the Flowers: Hawaiian Resistance Then—And Now" [April 28] is much appreciated. Most Americans know nothing of that history. On January 31 the Hawai'i Supreme Court issued an opinion addressing the rights and obligations of the State of Hawai'i regarding the lands that once belonged to the crown and the government in the Kingdom of Hawai'i, the so-called ceded lands.

The court stated that the Apology Resolution passed by Congress in 1993 is the law. The court also stated that its ruling means that the United States admits

(continued on page 24)

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Trust the Voters

So is it over? It's fair to say yes. Having been through the crucible of weeks of twenty-four-hour cable news hysteria about his supposedly flagging campaign, Barack Obama showed, with a convincing win in North Carolina and a near tie in Indiana, that the previous three months were not an aberration. He is, if by a narrow margin, the clear choice of Democratic voters and should be the nominee. Even if Hillary Clinton were to bully the DNC into seating the Florida and Michigan delegations, she cannot make up her gap in pledged delegates. Thus, superdelegates should move quickly to affirm the voters' choice and bring the nominating contest to a close. Any other result, one in which the voters' preference is subverted by party insiders, would lack legitimacy and inflict long-term damage on the coalition needed to build a progressive majority and to win in November.

EDITORIAL

This is not to say that Clinton should stop campaigning; she has every right to stay in. Indeed, to the extent that her continued presence in the race forces Obama to sharpen his economic appeal to working-class whites and older voters, it may have a salutary effect. But in the interest of a serious and principled debate about what's at stake in this election, she should stop pouring fuel on the ReverendWrightBillAyersFlagPin brush fires. It also does damage for her to run as a reborn right-wing populist, as she did when she endorsed and campaigned on John McCain's proposal to suspend the gas tax this summer. What Clinton can do is turn her sights on McCain and draw out the deep contrast between the candidates of the two parties.

The Obama and Clinton camps clearly have different views on the question of whether voters can be trusted to see through the gimmicks and smear tactics that have come to dominate presidential campaigns. The stinging defeats of the Bush years (and, stretching back, of the age of Reagan) have induced a nagging self-doubt among many on the center-left. They just don't trust that a majority of people are actually with them—or they've stopped believing that public sympathy will mean much once the right unleashes its culture-war arsenal. But a CBS/*New York Times* poll showed a majority opposed to the gas tax cut, exit polls showed voters to be largely unfazed by Reverend Wright, and Obama maintained or increased his share of the working-class white vote in Indiana and North Carolina. Which means: blue-collar voters, and voters in general, are smart enough to see through the condescension of politicians selling a policy their own advisers say is bunk or peddling guilt by association.

Supporters of Obama's improbable candidacy have had to preserve a deep faith that citizens will vote based on their experience of life in Bush's America and their vision of how it could be different. Of course, this can be taken too far: political graveyards are filled with liberal politicians who believed all they had to do was focus on the issues. But even Newt Gingrich, a principal author of the modern right-wing playbook, has recognized its diminishing returns. "The Republican brand has been so badly damaged that if Republicans try to run an anti-Obama, anti–Reverend Wright or… anti-Clinton campaign, they are simply going to fail," he wrote recently. "This model has already been tested, with disastrous results."

Now that this campaign is in its final stage, there's a possibility of reorienting the conversation toward things that matter—defining McCain as more right (and more wrong) than Bush, ending the Iraq occupation, repairing our patchwork healthcare system, regulating runaway financial markets—and away from things that don't.

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BOOKS & THE ARTS
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NATION POLL
McCain's most outrageous moves

Gitmo in Disarray

Guantánamo Bay

When Salim Hamdan, Osama bin Laden's alleged driver, returned to court recently for yet another hearing in his long odyssey through the ad hoc US legal system for suspected terrorists, he had an unlikely ally—Col. Morris Davis, the former chief prosecutor who charged him with war crimes in May 2007. Davis was there to testify as a defense witness in a motion to dismiss those charges because of unlawful interference by Bush Administration appointees, including Brig. Gen. Thomas Hartmann, legal adviser to the office that oversees the military commissions process.

COMMENT

Since his resignation in October, Davis, once a staunch advocate of the commissions, has become an outspoken critic of the Pentagon's handling of the Guantánamo cases. Although he doesn't doubt Hamdan's guilt, he believes the current system will be unable to administer fair and open trials. The Pentagon has previously disputed Davis's account and on April 28 sought to discredit him in court. "Colonel Davis was ineffective [as chief prosecutor]," said current chief prosecutor Col. Lawrence Morris, adding that "clearly [Davis] didn't like or get along with General Hartmann."

However, despite attempts to dismiss Davis's claims as a personality conflict, documents obtained by *The Nation*, as well as testimony entered into the record at Hamdan's pretrial hearing, reveal that Davis's opinions were shared by other prosecutors in the military commissions system. In fact, the two lead prosecutors in the *Hamdan* case—Lt. Cmdr. Timothy Stone and Lt. Col. William Britt—had on previous occasions complained of political interference by Hartmann and of the general "state of disarray" in the prosecutor's office since his arrival. Along with a detailed complaint Davis submitted to the Pentagon's inspector general last August, these documents describe an acute level of dysfunction in the military commissions office, in which prosecutors repeatedly raised concerns about "ethical violations," the "suspect public reputation" of the process, "further embarrassment to the office of the chief prosecutor" and the potential "disqualification of the legal advisor [Hartmann]."

In an August 2007 memorandum, Stone alerted then–chief prosecutor Davis of his intent to seek an opinion from the Navy JAG about "ethical concerns regarding the professed intentions of the Legal Advisor [Hartmann]." According to the memo, Hartmann had planned to meet Hamdan's civilian defense counsel in Cuba in September to negotiate a plea. "He told the prosecution team (LTC Britt and I) that we were not invited," the memo reads. Clearly frustrated, Stone wrote that Hartmann's knowledge of the *Hamdan* case was "totally insufficient" and that unless Hartmann was given additional information, "my client… the United States, will not be adequately represented." But if Stone were to provide Hartmann with the necessary case documents, he would have assisted Hartmann in "usurping the role" of the prosecutor and would thus "facilitate…the disqualification of the Legal Advisor," ultimately weakening Stone's case and causing "turmoil for the Commissions process."

Although Hartmann's backdoor negotiations never took

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Noted.

GUEST STAR NO. 5: Next up on **Passing Through**, our guest blog featuring monthly stints by some of America's top political bloggers, is **Zephyr Teachout**, best known as the architect of **Howard Dean**'s 2004 Internet strategy. A visiting assistant professor of election law at Duke University, she is the former national director of the Sunlight Foundation and a researcher at the Center for Investigative Journalism in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Zephyr also co-founded the Fair Trial Initiative, a North Carolina nonprofit dedicated to training young lawyers to be capital defense attorneys. An international expert on the use of the Internet in political campaigns, she has been featured on NPR, PBS, CNN, the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*.

PORTS FOR PEACE: Annual business activity associated with the twenty-nine strategically vital West Coast ports that run from San Diego to Anacortes, Washington, and drive the US-Asia shipping network accounts for more than 10 percent of US GDP. When contract negotiations idled the ports for more than a week in October 2002, losses ran to $1 billion daily until President Bush invoked the first Taft-Hartley injunction since 1971 to force the **International Longshore and Warehouse Union** back to work.

So it was with some measure of satisfaction that 10,000 ILWU members staged the broadest labor action to date against Bush's Iraq War, shutting down all West Coast ports for the daytime shift on May 1. The ILWU's long history of radicalism stretches back to founder **Harry Bridges**, leader of the 1934 San Francisco general strike, and includes outspoken opposition to US wars from Korea to Iraq. The May Day walkout, said the ILWU's **Craig Merrilees**, was a chance for port workers to "send a message to the folks in Washington that seem deaf to the overwhelming majority of Americans that want an end to the war." The action drew support from dozens of labor and peace groups—including in Iraq, where a statement signed by thirty-seven Iraqi labor leaders demanded an immediate withdrawal of US troops and expressed solidarity with workers around the world who "organised strikes and demonstrations to end the occupation." MAX FRASER

LONDON FALLING: As that eminent psephologist Roger Miller observed, "England swings like a pendulum do." So the Labour Party's humiliating defeat in local elections on May 1, finishing in third place behind the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats, was easy for the government to dismiss. In 2004, weighed down by the widely detested figure of **Tony Blair** and his support for the war, Labour set a record low for its share of the vote in local elections and still went on to win re-election in 2005. "There is no crisis," says Geoff Hoon, the government's chief whip. **Ken Livingstone**, who lost his bid for a third term as London's mayor, would disagree. Still, insofar as the word "crisis" conveys a sense of urgency, Hoon may be right. "Chronic" would be a better way to describe Labour's condition. Consider the scale of the disaster: the Conservatives won 44 percent of the overall vote: enough, if they can repeat it in the next election, to form a government. The Tories won council seats in places like Wigan, Bury and Sunderland—the northern heart of Labour's heartland.

Livingstone faced a relentless onslaught from the press and the widespread sense that he had become an arrogant autocrat. His refusal to apologize after likening a Jewish reporter to a concentration camp guard, his embrace of homophobic Egyptian cleric **Yusuf al-Qaradawi**, his dismissal of corruption charges against a key aide—these were all difficulties of his own making. Yet Livingstone has been a phenomenally successful mayor, introducing the congestion charge, upgrading bus service to lure millions of new riders and supervising the pedestrianization of Trafalgar Square. After the July 7, 2005, bombings, his passionate London pride united a racially and religiously diverse city. He finished twelve points ahead of Labour's national total, but it wasn't enough. London's new mayor, the American-born, Eton- and Oxford-educated **Boris Johnson**, is the former editor of the conservative magazine *The Spectator* and a novice MP whose political achievements had previously been overshadowed by his public philandering.

But if Livingstone's political career is now finished, **Gordon Brown** is also yesterday's man. His determination to abolish the 10 percent tax band hit Labour's core constituency in their wallets, doubling income taxes on the working poor, and let **David Cameron**'s Tories pose as defenders of the working class. Although Brown managed to stave off a rebellion in his party over the tax rate, his push to allow terror suspects to be held without charge for forty-two days may bring another revolt in a few weeks—and another chance for the Conservatives to position themselves to Labour's left. Brown can cling to office until 2010; his grip on power has already been fatally loosened. D.D. GUTTENPLAN

GOP JUSTICE: People for the American Way president **Kathryn Kolbert** writes:

John McCain's recent speech at Wake Forest University on federal judges contained few surprises but many red flags. To begin with, McCain bragged about his strong support for Bush's Supreme Court nominees **John Roberts** and **Samuel Alito**. These Justices have voted to: make it much harder for victims of pay discrimination to get justice; deny free speech protections to whistleblowers; make it harder for taxpayers to challenge federal spending that violates the separation of church and state; uphold a ban on an abortion procedure even though it had no exception to protect a woman's health; undermine school officials' efforts to promote racial diversity; and undermine the Endangered Species Act.

Decrying "judicial activism" and judges who "make law instead of apply it," McCain made it clear that he will push the judiciary further to the right. Conservatives apply such terms selectively—slamming the courthouse door in the face of those harmed by powerful corporations doesn't count as "activism" in their book. In fact, among the judges confirmed under the "Gang of 14" agreement McCain touts were ideologues **William Pryor** and **Janice Rogers Brown** and right-wing judicial "activist" **Priscilla Owen**. The record couldn't be clearer: McCain has backed every one of Bush's most dangerous and damaging judges. Now we all know that he's damn proud of it.

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place, Stone's ethical dilemma underscores the problem inherent in the job of the legal adviser. On the one hand, Hartmann is required to "independently and objectively provide cogent legal advice to the convening authority," says Susan Crawford, an appointee who by law is required to remain neutral. On the other hand, the legal adviser also supervises the prosecution, a directive Hartmann has seemingly interpreted to mean that he is the de facto chief prosecutor.

"When legal advisor is meant to give independent and objective advice to the convening authority and then talks to the prosecutor about how to prosecute the case—that creates a conflict of interest," says John Hutson, president of Franklin Pierce Law Center and the former Navy JAG. "He has overstepped his bounds and possibly created unlawful command influence."

A second document, an unpublished op-ed written by Stone in response to a September 2007 *Wall Street Journal* article, confirms that the "prosecution office has been in a state of disarray since the arrival of Brigadier General Hartmann." Stone's op-ed corroborates Davis's claim that Hartmann was fixated on prosecuting "sexy" cases that would politically benefit the Bush Administration. This claim is further bolstered by a statement from Britt, read in court by defense attorneys, that explains Hartmann's rationale for pursuing particular cases. According to Britt, Hartmann said, "The reason is, this case will seize the imagination of the American people and that case won't."

A third document, a memo Davis submitted to the Pentagon inspector general, recounts clashes with Hartmann over day-to-day functions of the prosecutor's office. According to Davis, at one meeting "Hartmann said: 'I wear two hats. In one I'm responsible for providing legal advice to the convening authority and in the other I'm responsible for the prosecution.'" Davis's memo says Hartmann wanted to increase the rate at which cases were charged, over prosecutors' objections that many weren't ready, sometimes because evidence hadn't been declassified.

Davis's inspector general complaint was ignored because, as he was told, the matter had been "satisfactorily resolved" by a previous investigation, which ruled in favor of Hartmann. But it also warned the legal adviser to "diligently avoid aligning himself with the prosecutorial function." Current chief prosecutor Morris contends that Hartmann is not unlawfully influencing his office and that Britt's and Stone's comments merely "reflect an understandable and intense sense of ownership of a case." (Britt and Stone are prohibited by military gag order from speaking to the press; Hartmann declined to comment.)

According to Lt. Cmdr. Brian Mizer, the lead defense counsel for Hamdan, even if his motion to dismiss based on unlawful influence is denied, the issue will be raised in subsequent cases. "The government has somewhat of an argument" because Hamdan was charged before Hartmann arrived, Mizer concedes. "But that's like saying, 'Yeah, the house is on fire, but this room is OK.'" Indeed, despite Hartmann's push to accelerate the trials with a flurry of recent charges, the tribunals remain mired in other unresolved issues—concerns about the use of coerced testimony, counsel's access to clients, adequate resources and training for the defense, withheld evidence and undisclosed witnesses—that continue to plague their legitimacy.

Then there are the defendants. On the second day of the hearing, Salim Hamdan announced his decision to boycott his trial—as have now four others. "There is no justice in this court," said the 38-year-old Yemeni. "If you want to try me, you can by civil law or any law that is recognized." ROSS TUTTLE

Ross Tuttle is a documentary filmmaker and freelance journalist. Research support was provided by the Investigative Fund of The Nation Institute.

Calvin Trillin, Deadline Poet

A Citizen Who Has Tried to Keep Informed Addresses Those Covering the 2008 Presidential Election

I'm now opposed to Reverend Wright.
I don't support him anymore.
I only have one question left:
Just what's the Reverend running for?

Market Media Meltdown

If the National Weather Service issued a warning about a tsunami nearing our shores, here's what you'd see on your TV screen: news centers turned into "storm centers," with fancy graphics and Doppler radars tracking the likely "strike zone," and brave reporters in rain gear hugging the coastline, heightening alarm about the disaster to come.

COMMENT

Yet when a calamity struck last summer—a financial tsunami, tied to the implosion of the subprime mortgage market—most media were asleep at the switch. True, there were reports about the market meltdown, but the crisis sparked little breaking-news excitement, and the presidential candidates didn't touch the subject of a financial crisis for months.

The mystery deepens when you realize how much attention our media give to business news. After all, there are three twenty-four-hour cable stations—CNBC, Fox Business and Bloomberg TV—monitoring every blip in the indices. Thomson Reuters and AP now compete with Murdoch's Dow Jones to get the news to us first. PBS has its *Nightly Business Report*, and NPR does *Marketplace*. There are endless magazines and corporate news websites. All the networks have their experts, and every newspaper has a business section.

A major part of the problem is that the financial journalists who cover Wall Street are used to writing for Wall Street's customers—the very mortgage companies and financial institutions that were raking in millions from the bubble. And the major business news outlets speak to buyers and sellers, rarely to consumers and citizens. All of these outlets have relatively small

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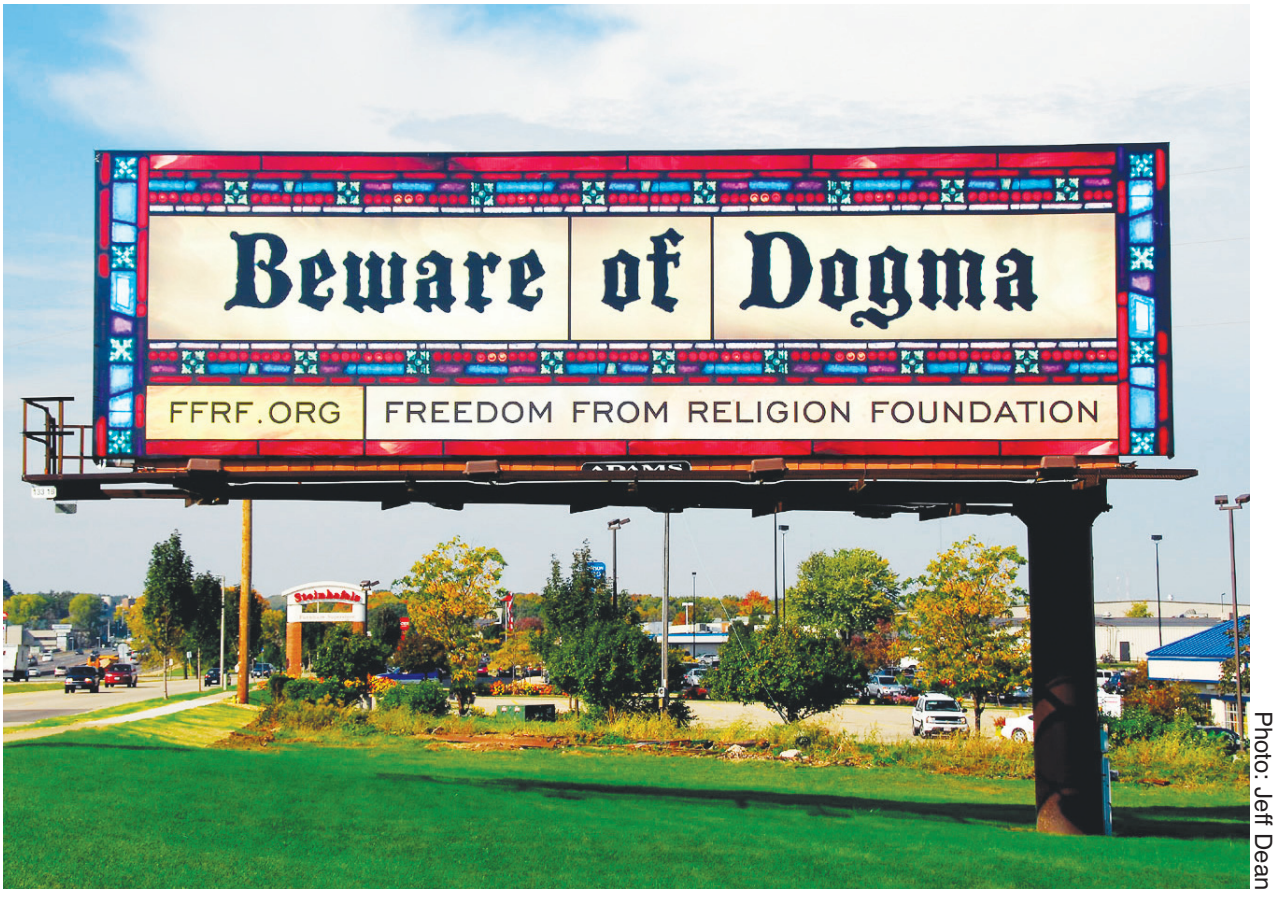

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audiences of high-income viewers. According to Monroe Mendelsohn Research, the typical CNBC viewer has a net worth of $2.7 million, with a $156,000 average income. (Nielsen puts the CNBC home viewer's income at $73,000, compared with the average cable viewer's income of $48,000.) For many of these outlets, demographics are destiny—they cover the news of, for and by the elite.

Much of our media are tethered to a mission to pump up confidence, no doubt to support their advertisers. They ignore realists and critics and play up the prognostications of insiders, usually perennial optimists who have been consistently wrong in their predictions. Jim Cramer, for example, the biggest mouth on the air, initially dismissed the subprime problem.

In a culture that promotes consumption through media that do more selling than telling, it's not acceptable to discourage spending. The huge sums earned from commercials by predatory lenders and credit card companies started in earnest after the 2000 tech crash dried up hundreds of millions in dot-com advertising. When Wall Street, with help from Alan Greenspan's Federal Reserve, began blowing up a new bubble to revive the economy, this time in housing, a flood of mortgage ads and credit card solicitations inundated TV, radio and the Internet. The wave continued even after a parade of banks began announcing billion-dollar write-downs and mortgage companies imploded. Nielsen Monitor-Plus reported that since 2000, mortgage lenders have spent over $3 billion in ads on TV, radio and in print.

The *New York Times* exposed all this seven years after the ad avalanche began, adding, "That figure does not include direct mail and Internet advertising, which are increasingly popular vehicles for the industry. Nielsen/NetRatings estimates that mortgage companies spent $378 million in the first six months of [2007] on Internet display ads." Yes, this was reported—but not when it might have done some good. It was like closing the barn door after the horses were gone.

Major newspapers began launching joint marketing projects with realtors, who buy many of the ads in the Sunday papers, an important profit center for the dailies. Huge marketing budgets were deployed to peddle shoddy products. Ameriquest, one of the 255 bankrupt lenders (later purchased by Citigroup), bought million-dollar-plus spots on Super Bowl broadcasts. MasterCard was a major sponsor of the Academy Awards. The Truth in Lending Act nominally regulates credit TV advertising, but enforcement has been weak, often nonexistent. A perusal of real estate blogs finds brokers sniping at all the inaccurate and deceptive ads transmitted by TV and radio stations.

I raised the issue of shady advertising with four FCC commissioners who spoke in January at Jesse Jackson's Wall Street Summit. They all agreed it was deplorable but said the Federal Trade Commission, not the FCC, is responsible for monitoring it. Good luck. How can we expect regulations governing ads to be enforced when even more crucial financial laws have not been enforced by an Administration that believes in deregulation with a fervency bordering on the religious?

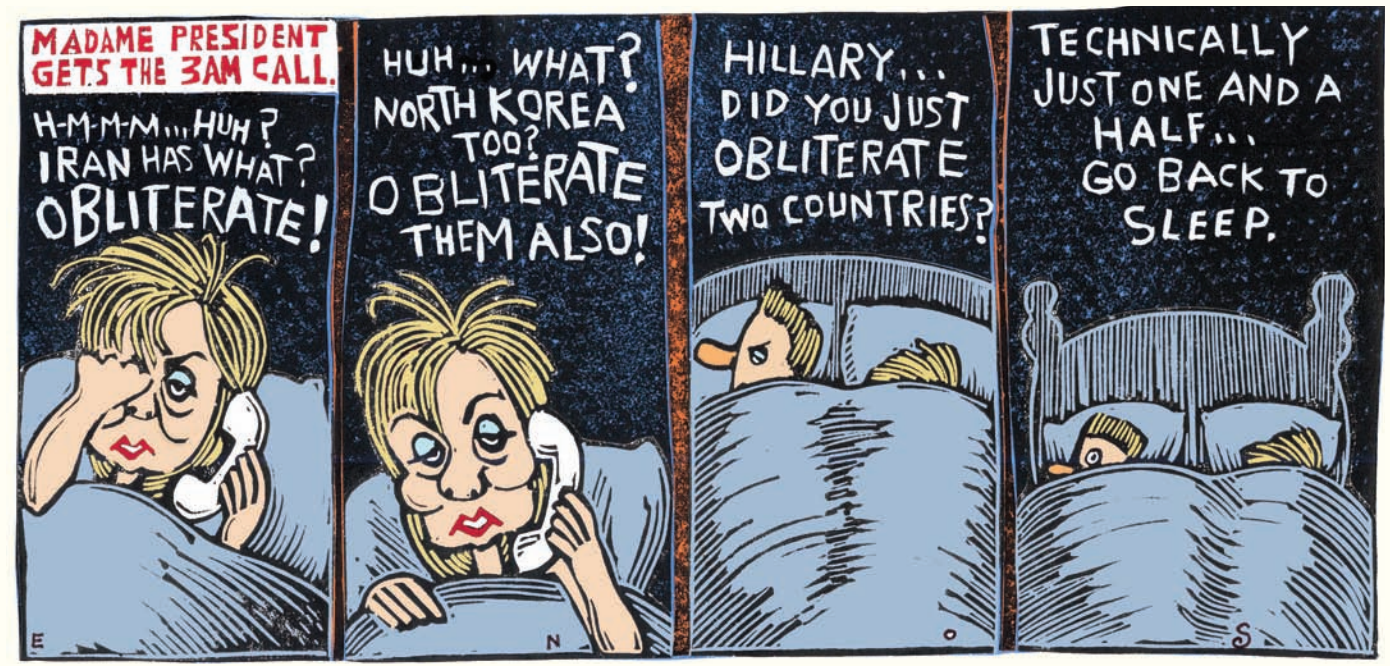
More and more, it seems, you have to seek out reporting from other countries to find out what's really going on. Larry Elliott, economics editor of the London *Guardian*, observed recently, "It is somewhat surprising that there is not already rioting in the streets, given the gigantic fraud perpetrated by the financial elite at the expense of ordinary Americans."

If there are ever any prosecutions of wrongdoers in this subprime Ponzi scheme, the media outlets should be investigated for the role they played in promoting predatory and fraudulent lending. But don't hold your breath for the "money honeys" on CNBC to frame the story this way. DANNY SCHECHTER

"News Dissector" Danny Schechter, executive editor of MediaChannel.org (dissector@mediachannel.org), directed the film In Debt We Trust *(InDebtWeTrust.org) and has finished a new book on this crisis,* Plunder.

Comix Nation

by RANDALL ENOS


MADAME PRESIDENT GETS THE 3AM CALL.
H-M-M-M... HUH? IRAN HAS WHAT? OBLITERATE!
HUH... WHAT? NORTH KOREA TOO? OBLITERATE THEM ALSO!
HILLARY... DID YOU JUST OBLITERATE TWO COUNTRIES?
TECHNICALLY JUST ONE AND A HALF... GO BACK TO SLEEP.

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Alexander Cockburn

The Year of the Prisoner

Listening to Hillary Clinton's top aides trying to put a good face on the results of the Indiana primary had the same surreal quality as an aide to Hitler reporting "encouraging news" from Stalingrad. Her candidacy died on May 6. She needed at least a 10 percent win in Indiana, and in the end she scraped through by not much more than 16,000 votes. Every day she stays in the race means more zeroes on her campaign debt, which probably tops $25 million right now, when all the IOUs are counted. Hillary might have to go back into the cattle futures business.

There's talk of Mrs. Clinton telling Obama that the price of concession is that he settle her campaign debt and take her on the ticket. He's got the money, though he should use it for worthier purposes. As for the number-two spot, what does it take to keep the Clintons clear of the White House? A stake through both their hearts? If ever a campaign disclosed low moral and political fiber, it was this one. Bill ended up as a petulant sleazeball and Hillary as a war drum thumper, marching shoulder to shoulder with John McCain.

Prison is the leitmotif of this year's campaign. Obama was—and may remain—the prisoner of his pastor, the Rev. Jeremiah Wright. Hillary was the prisoner of her yes-to-war-on-Iraq vote. McCain owes his whole political career to his stint in a prison in Vietnam. Nervous though liberals are of the issue, the real extent of McCain's collaboration with his Vietnamese captors should be a hot issue in the fall. There are more prisoners here per capita than in any country in the world. We have prisons where Americans torture their captives into madness and suicide. America itself is prisoner of the economic philosophy of neoliberalism, dying before our eyes.

In the White House now is our top POW, the war in question being the one in Iraq. Will Bush compound this disaster by launching an attack on Iran? Many have predicted it, though I've never thought it would come to full-scale open conflict. But Bush and Cheney are certainly upping the ante. Andrew Cockburn reported on our *CounterPunch* website on May 2 that "six weeks ago, President Bush signed a secret finding authorizing a covert offensive against the Iranian regime that, according to those familiar with its contents, is 'unprecedented in its scope.' Bush's secret directive covers actions across a huge geographic area—from Lebanon to Afghanistan—but is also far more sweeping in the type of actions permitted under its guidelines—up to and including the assassination of targeted officials."

The source for Andrew's major scoop, a former official on the National Security Council, indicated that the new program of destabilization will mean money and weapons showered on dissident groups in Iran, Iranian Kurdish nationalists and the Ahwazi Arabs of southwest Iran. "Operations against Iran's Hezbollah allies in Lebanon will be stepped up, along with efforts to destabilize the Syrian regime."

The covert program is budgeted at $300 million, which Democratic leaders in Congress approved in a secret session after listening to the request for a special appropriation. No doubt the ardent support of the Israel lobby for escalation toward war on Iran played a significant role in the Democrats' green light. In rhetorical terms, the stage scenery is all in place.

"Is it fair to say that the Iranian-backed special groups in Iraq are responsible for the murder of hundreds of American soldiers and thousands of Iraqi soldiers and civilians?" Senator Joe Lieberman asked Gen. David Petraeus in recent hearings. "It certainly is.… That is correct," the general dutifully replied, testifying the next day that "unchecked, the 'special groups' pose the greatest long-term threat to the viability of a democratic Iraq."

CBS has reported that the State Department is at work on an ultimatum, presumably advising Iran of drastic military sanctions unless it quits all its current activities in Iraq. US military deployments to the Gulf buttress this rhetorical barrage.

Will we see Condoleezza Rice doing a reprise of Gen. Colin Powell's notorious briefing to the UN, only this time targeting Iran? I still doubt it. On such matters US credibility remains at an all-time low, and the US economy is not in fit shape for another war. Citigroup, the world's largest financial services company, is headed for bankruptcy, held clear of immediate ruin only by giving Abu Dhabi 11 percent interest on a bailout loan.

But the evidence for continued escalation is thick on the ground. Congressional resistance, always frail, was broken last fall. The only significant resistance to war is a very significant number of ordinary Americans, and who cares about them?

The USS Jimmy Carter

I had some sarcastic words in my column about enthusiasts for nuclear submarines such as former President Jimmy Carter, who expressed his pleasure back in 2000 at having a Seawolf-class sub named after him.

A reader took umbrage at my reference to the irony of peace-seeker Carter being associated by name with an instrument of war that could shower a city with nuclear missiles. The USS Jimmy Carter, the reader said, is not armed with nuclear munitions. Maybe, maybe not. Pesky arms accords did take the nuclear warheads off the Tomahawk missiles of these subs, but who's to know if Bush and Cheney haven't ordered them to be put back on?

At all events, tasked with attacking underwater communications systems and other subs, the USS Jimmy Carter will be in the thick of nuclear conflict, perhaps starting with George Bush's or John McCain's war on Iran. Carter should get his name off the sub or, better still, emulate the radical Catholics and go and pour blood over it next time it shows up in port. ■

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Katha Pollitt

Backlash Spectacular

Washington University is giving Phyllis Schlafly an honorary doctorate. Let me run that by you again. *Washington University*, the distinguished 155-year-old seat of higher learning in St. Louis, is giving an honorary degree to *Phyllis Schlafly*—archfoe of the Equal Rights Amendment, the United Nations, Darwinism and other newfangled notions, and the promoter of innumerable crackpot far-right conspiracy theories who called the Bomb "a marvelous gift that was given to our country by a wise God." Her eighty-two years haven't mellowed her one bit: last year she blamed the Virginia Tech massacre on the English department; called intellectual men "liberal slobs"; advocated banning women from traditionally male occupations like construction, firefighting and the military; and defended men's property rights over their wives' vaginas ("by getting married, the woman has consented to sex, and I don't think you can call it rape"). The campus is in an uproar, and no wonder. After four years of hard work, female seniors get to watch their school honor someone who thinks they should park their diplomas in the kitchen sink. Washington U might as well bring in mad misogynist Chris Matthews as commencement speaker. Oh. You mean…? No! Yes.

Tell me the backlash against feminism isn't crackling up a storm. I try to keep my eye on the big picture and the bottom line: education, employment, autonomy, power. Surely, I tell myself, the fact that half of all new med students are female is more important than Paris Hilton's omnipresent visage; that a woman has made the first viable run for the presidency says more about the United States than that media clowns like Matthews basically call her a crazy castrating bitch on a daily basis; or that Caitlin Flanagan, smarmy enemy of working mothers (and another big believer in compulsory sex for wives), won a National Magazine Award for reviews and criticism.

But sometimes I think we're truly going backward, as Republican hegemony, conservative Christianity and anti-feminist media propaganda take their cumulative toll. All those judges, all that money, all that shock jockery, all those magazines obsessively following stars' weight and baby bumps: it would be strange if they had no effect. As far as concrete setbacks go, look no further than the case of Lilly Ledbetter, whose right to sue for pay discrimination was denied by the Supreme Court last May. In a 5-to-4 decision, the Justices overturned the standard interpretation of existing law to declare that Ledbetter was twenty years too late: the victim of pay discrimination must sue within six months of the initial discriminatory act—never mind whether she knew about it (many employers, including Ledbetter's, forbid workers from discussing their salaries; she found out she was paid less than any man at her level from an anonymous tip). Given the realities of life, the Court has given employers the nod to pay women less, as long as they can keep the women in the dark for 180 days. In April a bill to restore women's right to sue failed in the Senate, 56-to-42, because for some reason everything now needs sixty votes to become law. John McCain said the bill would lead to too many lawsuits (hello? all it would have done was restore the law we'd lived with for forty-four years); what women needed was more "education and training." Because right now, women are just too dumb to merit equal pay. As Dahlia Lithwick wrote in a coruscating piece in *Slate*, if women take this sitting down, maybe they really *are* dumb.

The suspicion that women are dim would explain why Oklahoma has just passed a law requiring not only that women seeking abortions be forced to view sonograms of their fetuses but that the picture be taken in the way most likely to reveal the clearest picture—often up their vaginas. In other antichoice news, an abortion ban will be on the ballot again in South Dakota, this time with narrow exceptions for rape and incest. And mark June 7 on your calendar—it's Protest the Pill day, brought to you by the American Life League and other antichoice groups, which claim, despite the evidence, that "the Pill kills babies" by preventing implantation of fertilized eggs. Maybe it's good that the antichoice movement is outing itself as opposed to contraception, as prochoicers have long maintained and not many pundits have noted—but it also shows that they believe they can come out of the closet and not be dismissed as lunatics. Look for more struggles over government birth-control funding—already way down, thanks to budget cuts and inflation—as the antichoicers move the goal posts of how "life" is defined.

Yes, women are still making gains in education and—slowly—in politics and other areas. But longstanding feminist gains are eroding: battered women's shelters, for example, are closing for lack of funds. And the advances haven't made the difference once hoped for. There are more powerful female Hollywood executives than ever, but as Manohla Dargis pointed out in a splendid rant (her word) in the *New York Times*, the movies are relentlessly male-focused: the conventional Hollywood wisdom is "Women can't direct. Women can't open movies. Women are a niche." Culturally, there's misogyny wherever you look: Grand Theft Auto IV, which offers players the opportunity to have sex with prostitutes and kill them, got rave reviews and is expected to have $500 million in sales its first week out. If there's a pro-woman cultural event with that kind of reach and impact, I'd like to hear about it. It certainly wouldn't be *Vanity Fair*'s photo of tween icon Miley Cyrus, clad in nothing but a bedsheet at all of 15 years old—or the daily media onslaught urging women to focus on their babies like a Zen master contemplating a rock—when not taking pole-dancing lessons, getting Botoxed or catching up on the latest "studies" purporting to prove that they lack the drive and brains to do anything better with their brief time on earth. Feminism, please call home! ■

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DMITRI KESSEL/TIME LIFE PICTURES/GETTY IMAGES

JOHN PHILLIPS/TIME LIFE PICTURES/GETTY IMAGES

Top: Jewish refugees arriving in Haifa in January 1948; bottom: Palestinian refugees fleeing in May 1948

A Somber Anniversary

by AVI SHLAIM

Israelis approach the sixtieth anniversary of the establishment of their state in a subdued and somber mood. Israeli society is deeply divided, and there is no consensus on how to mark the milestone. On the one hand, Israel can boast some stunning successes: a democratic polity with universal suffrage; a highly developed, some might say overdeveloped, multiparty system; an independent judiciary; a vibrant cultural scene; progressive educational and health services; a high standard of living; and a per capita GDP almost the size of Britain's.

The ingathering of the exiles has worked. Israel's population has reached 7,241,000, nearly ten times what it was in 1948. Forty-one percent of the world's Jews live in the Jewish state, speaking the Hebrew language that was confined to liturgy when Zionism was born at the end of the nineteenth century. In its central aim of providing the scattered Jews with a haven, instilling in them a sense of nationhood and forging a modern nation-state, Zionism has been a brilliant success. And these achievements are all the more remarkable against the background of appalling tragedy: the extermination of 6 million Jews by the Nazis during World War II.

On the other hand, some failures can be noted. The most pronounced one has been the failure to resolve the conflict

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FDR was a longtime Nation *reader.*

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with the Arabs, which has accompanied the Zionist enterprise from the very beginning. That conflict involved neighboring Arab states, but in origin and in essence it was a clash between two movements for national liberation: the Jewish one and the Palestinian one. In 1948 the Zionist movement realized its aim of Jewish national self-determination in Palestine. Israel's War of Independence was the Palestinians' catastrophe, al-Nakba in Arabic.

The moral case for the establishment of an independent Jewish state was strong, especially in the aftermath of the Holocaust. The case for a Jewish state was also bolstered by the international norm of self-determination for national groups. Based on this norm, the UN partition resolution of November 29, 1947, provided a charter of international legitimacy for the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. However, there is no denying that the establishment of the State of Israel involved a massive injustice to the Palestinians. Sixty years on, Israel still has not arrived at a reckoning of its sins against the Palestinians, a recognition that it owes the Palestinians a debt that must at some point be repaid.

The conflict with the Palestinians, and with the Arab world at large, has cast a very long shadow over Israel's life. For the first forty-five years of the state's existence, Israel's leaders were unwilling to discuss the right of the Palestinians to national self-determination. In 1969 Prime Minister Golda Meir adopted an extreme position—hardly an uncommon one at the time—in denying that a Palestinian people existed at all. But the dilemma had been there all along, and the early Zionists were well aware of it, even if they seldom talked about it. The dilemma, in a nutshell, was that the Jewish aspiration to sovereignty in Palestine could not be reconciled with the Palestinian people's natural right to sovereignty over the same country. This was the "hidden question" that Zionist teacher Yitzhak Epstein addressed in an article in 1907. It was not long before the hidden question was transformed into an open and deeply contentious issue.

Ze'ev Jabotinsky, founder of the right-wing Revisionist Zionist movement and spiritual father of the Likud Party, was the first major Zionist leader to acknowledge that the Palestinians were a nation and that they could not be expected to renounce voluntarily their right to hold on to their patrimony. It was, he argued in two seminal articles in 1923, therefore pointless at that early stage in the Zionist enterprise to hold a dialogue with the Palestinians; the Zionist program could only be executed unilaterally and by force. Jabotinsky's prescription was to build the Zionist enterprise behind an "iron wall" that the local Arab population would not be able to break. Yet Jabotinsky was not opposed to talking with the Palestinians at a later stage. On the contrary, he believed that after knocking their heads in vain against the ramparts, the Palestinians would eventually recognize that they were in a position of permanent weakness; that would be the time to enter into negotiations with them about their status and national rights in Palestine.

In a way, this is what happened. The history of the State of Israel is a vindication of Jabotinsky's strategy of the iron wall. The Arabs—first the Egyptians, then the Palestinians and then the Jordanians—recognized Israel's invincibility and were compelled to negotiate with it from a position of palpable weakness. The real danger posed by the strategy of the iron wall was that Israeli leaders less sophisticated than Jabotinsky would fall in love with a particular phase of it and refuse to negotiate even when there was someone to talk to on the other side.

Paradoxically, the politicians of the right, the heirs to Jabotinsky, were prone to fall in love with the iron wall and to adopt it as a permanent way of life. Jabotinsky's iron wall encompassed a theory of change in Jewish-Palestinian relations leading to reconciliation and peaceful coexistence. Likud Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, by contrast, conceived of the iron wall as a bulwark against change and an instrument for keeping the Palestinians in a permanent state of subservience to Israel.

Israel's right-wing politicians, having fallen in love with the old Revisionist strategy of the 'iron wall,' have adopted it as a permanent way of life.

The first serious attempt to transcend the iron wall was made by Yitzhak Rabin following the Labor Party's victory at the polls in June 1992. On the face of it, Rabin was an unlikely candidate for overturning Israel's traditional policy toward the Arab world. He had spent a lifetime as a soldier, building up the iron wall for the dual purpose of deterring and withstanding Arab attacks. As chief of staff in June 1967, he was associated with Israel's most decisive victory over its enemies and the extension of the wall to enclose more of their territories. After the war, he sided with the majority in the Labor Party in preferring a settlement with Jordan's King Hussein to a settlement with the Palestinians. During his first term as prime minister, in the 1970s, Rabin remained implacably opposed to any negotiations with the PLO.

But during his second term, after exhausting all alternatives, Rabin grasped the nettle, which meant negotiating with the PLO. The upshot was the Oslo Accord and the historic handshake with PLO chairman Yasir Arafat at the White House in September 1993. What the accord amounted to was PLO recognition of Israel's right to exist, Israeli recognition of the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people and an understanding between the two sides that the remaining differences between them would be settled by peaceful means.

The Oslo Accord was a major breakthrough in the century-old conflict between Jews and Arabs in Palestine. It was the first-ever agreement between the two principal parties to the conflict. Recognition of a sort replaced absolute, mutual rejection. By signing the agreement, the Palestinians conceded the legitimacy of the Jewish state over 78 percent of what had been the British Mandate of Palestine. What they expected to get in return—though this was not written down in

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the agreement—was independence over the remaining 22 percent: the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem.

To be sure, the agreement on "Gaza and Jericho first," as the 1993 accord was often described in shorthand, fell a long way short of the Palestinian aspiration to full independence and statehood. But the agreement did set in motion a gradual and controlled Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Palestinian territories. In the two years following the signing of the accord, substantial progress was achieved. Cooperation between the security services of the two sides was very close, and also progress was made in empowering the Palestinians to govern themselves, culminating in the Oslo II Accord of September 1995. This period wasn't without tensions—Palestinians were furious that Rabin continued to approve expansion of Israeli settlements. But it was the overall success, not the failure, of the Oslo peace process that provoked a right-wing backlash in Israel and the assassination of Rabin by a Jewish religious fanatic in November 1995. The assassination achieved its purpose: it crippled the peace process. There is no way of telling what would have happened had Rabin survived; history does not disclose its alternatives. But there can be no doubt that in the aftermath of the murder it was much more difficult to follow the course Rabin had charted.

Israel has tried every conceivable method of ending the conflict with the Palestinians except the obvious one: ending the occupation.

With the murder of Rabin, the peace process began to falter. In a long-term historical perspective, however, the series of agreements between 1993 and 1999 under the auspices of Oslo were not a failure. Nor were they doomed to fail from the start. They did not collapse under the weight of their own contradictions, as critics like to argue. Rather, the peace process failed because Israel, under the leadership of the Likud, reneged on its side of the original deal.

Likud Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was no friend of the Oslo Accord. He regarded it as incompatible with the historic right of the Jewish people to the entire Land of Israel and with Israel's right to security. Netanyahu spent his three years in power, from 1996 to 1999, in a largely successful attempt to arrest and subvert the peace process. By subverting it, he inflicted serious damage not only on the Palestinians but on his own country and on the Middle East as a whole.

As far back as 1988, the Palestinians had made their choice. They offered Israel recognition and peace in return for a minimal restitution of what had been taken away from them by force. Since then the ball has been in Israel's court. Israel had to choose. Netanyahu and his colleagues in the ultranationalist camp chose to go back on the historic compromise struck by their Labor predecessors and to return to confrontation.

In May 1999 the Israeli electorate deposed Netanyahu and replaced him with Ehud Barak in order to give peace a chance. Barak won a clear mandate to return to the path of his mentor and commanding officer, Rabin. Barak was a brilliant soldier but a political novice who quickly frittered away his initial advantages and ended up betraying all the hopes that had been pinned on him. Part of the problem was Barak's clear preference for a peace deal with Syria first in order to isolate and weaken the Palestinians. Another problem was Barak's refusal to fulfill Israel's obligations under previous agreements. But the most fundamental obstacle to peace with the Palestinians was settlement expansion on the West Bank. All Israeli governments, Labor as well as Likud, continued to build settlements after the 1993 accord was signed. This did not violate the letter of the accord, but it most definitely violated the spirit. It was simply not reasonable to expect the Palestinians to go forward toward a peace deal when Israel was expropriating more and more of their land. Land-grabbing and peacemaking do not go well together. This became clear at the Camp David summit in July 2000. The package offered by Barak was not enough to persuade the Palestinian negotiators to give him what he wanted: a formal and final end to the conflict. Following the collapse of the summit, Barak propagated the notion that there was no Palestinian partner for peace. This was not true; there was a Palestinian partner, but not on Barak's terms.

With the collapse of the Camp David summit, the countdown to the outbreak of the next round of violence began. Ariel Sharon, the leader of the opposition, provided the spark that set off the explosion. On September 28, 2000, flanked by a thousand security men and in deliberate disregard of the sensitivity of Muslim worshipers, Sharon ostentatiously walked into Jerusalem's Haram al-Sharif, the Noble Sanctuary. His walk-about sparked riots that spread to other Arab areas of East Jerusalem and to other cities. Within a very short time, the riots snowballed into a full-scale uprising—the Al-Aqsa Intifada. The escalating violence, and the belief that there was no Palestinian partner for peace, paved the way to Barak's political demise and to Sharon's Likud victory in the February 2001 election.

The rise to power of Sharon, the champion of violent solutions, marked the end of any serious negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. Sharon personified the most xenophobic, aggressive, expansionist and racist brand of Zionism. He could boast—and he would have regarded it as a reason for boasting—that he remained in power for five years without ever resuming negotiations on the final status of the territories. His policy toward the Palestinians consisted of the iron fist inside the iron glove. Under Sharon's leadership Israel reverted to unilateralism in its purest and most unrestrained form. His objective was to set aside the Oslo Accords, to fragment and mutilate the Palestinian territories, to reassert total Israeli control over the West Bank and to deny the Palestinians any independent political existence in Palestine. His long-term aim was to redraw the borders of Greater Israel. The unilateral disengagement from Gaza in 2005 was a step in that direction, not a prelude to an overall agreement but to the de facto annexation of major West Bank settlement blocs. Sharon will therefore go down in Israel's history not as a peacemaker but as the proponent of the doctrine of permanent conflict.

The trouble with unilateral action is that it holds no hope for

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peace. On the contrary, it is a recipe for never-ending bloodshed. The Israeli right thus provided both the paradigm for solving the conflict with the Palestinians and the politicians who are unable or unwilling to act on it. Consequently, on its sixtieth anniversary, Israel still faces the same dilemma it was faced with forty-one years ago, after seizing new territory in the 1967 war: it can have land or it can have peace. It cannot have both.

During the past forty-one years Israel has tried every conceivable method of ending the conflict with the Palestinians except the obvious one: ending the occupation. The occupation has to end, not simply because the Palestinians deserve no less but in order to preserve the values for which the State of Israel was created. In any case, whether Israelis like it or not, an independent Palestinian state is inevitable in the long run—when the game is no longer worth the candle. The moral, political and psychological cost of the occupation cannot be sustained indefinitely. Just as Israel withdrew under duress from southern Lebanon in 2000 and from Gaza in 2005, so, eventually, will it be compelled to relinquish all but a tiny fraction of the West Bank.

To its credit, the Israeli public has never been as implacably opposed to an independent Palestinian state as the politicians of the right. The question now is whether Israel will give the Palestinians a chance to build that state or strive endlessly to frustrate it. That is the real test of statesmanship as Israel enters its seventh decade. At the time of writing there is precious little evidence to suggest that Israel's leaders are willing to rise to the challenge. They appear united in their determination to preserve Israel's military and economic control over the West Bank. Yet there is some ground for optimism. The Palestinians learned from their own mistakes: they put rejectionism behind them, moderated their program and opted for a two-state solution. It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that the Israelis will one day learn from their mistakes and elect leaders who recognize the need for a genuine two-state solution. Nations, like individuals, are capable of acting rationally—after they have exhausted all the alternatives. ■

Palestine: Liberation Deferred

A just resolution of the Palestine question depends on the Palestinians themselves.

by RASHID KHALIDI

The "Palestine Question" has been with us for sixty years. During this time it has become a running sore, its solution appearing ever more distant. Whether the events sixty years ago that created this question solved the previously perennial "Jewish Question" is once again open to debate. This is the case after many years when the apparent triumph of Zionism stilled doubts and drowned out the protests of those who argued that what purported to be the solution to one problem had created an entirely different one.

It is considered by some to be a slur on Israel and Zionism, and indeed even tantamount to anti-Semitism, to suggest that these events sixty years ago should be the subject of anything but unmitigated joy. Commemoration, or even analysis, of what Palestinians call their national catastrophe, al-Nakba—the expulsion, flight and loss of their homes by a majority of their people sixty years ago—is thus considered not in terms of this seminal event's meaning to at least 8 million Palestinians today (some estimates are over 10 million) but only because it is directly related to the founding of Israel. Palestinians presumably do not have the right to recall, much less mourn, their national disaster if this would rain on the parade of celebrating Zionists everywhere. The fact that the 1948 war that created Israel also created the largest refugee problem in the Middle East (until the US occupation of Iraq turned 4 million people into refugees) must therefore be swept under the rug. Also disregarded is the obvious fact that it would have been impossible to create a Jewish state in a land nearly two-thirds of whose population was Arab without some form of ethnic cleansing.

It is ironic and tragic that the resolution, if indeed it was a resolution, of a Jewish question should have created a Palestine question. It is even more ironic that the former should have been resolved not where it arose in its most acute form, in the West, or at the West's expense, but rather in Palestine, and to the detriment of Palestine's people. This was in large part the result of the efforts of a West stricken by a (fully justified) sense of guilt for centuries of suffering inflicted on European Jews, culminating in the Holocaust, a West that compounded its sins by helping to inflict further suffering, this time on Palestinians. It is also tragic that beyond the harm that was done to the Palestinians by the growth of Zionism and the establishment of Israel, these same developments should have led to the uprooting of the world's oldest and most secure Jewish communities, which had found in the Arab lands a tolerance that, albeit imperfect, was nonexistent in the often genocidal, Jew-hating Christian West.

A few things seem clear sixty years after 1948. One is that if the Jewish question has lost its saliency, perhaps more as a consequence of the enormity of the atrocities of the Nazis than for any other reason, the creation of Israel has raised different questions and problems for its supporters and others. To the extent that Zionism has succeeded in winning acceptance of its assertion that all Jews are part of a national body whose nation-state is Israel, it has linked the status and circumstances of Jews everywhere not only to the fate of that state but to every facet of that state's policies and actions. Insofar as some of those policies and actions may be unacceptable, their very existence must be denied or elided, and reality bent to suit the tender sensibilities of supporters of Israel: for example, the rank discrimination against the 1.4 million Arab

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citizens of Israel who are not part of the Jewish ethnicity in whose name and for whose interests the state was created and exists; or the collective punishment inflicted on the 1.5 million people of the Gaza Strip imprisoned for months on end; or the systematic torture and humiliation inflicted on the hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who have passed through the Israeli prison system. We see the results of this bending of reality in the travesty that passes for news coverage of Israel and Palestine in the American media.

Where reality cannot be bent and such violations of basic human rights and dignity cannot be denied or elided, they are justified as necessary for the "security" of the Jewish state. This argument carries weight after centuries of profound Jewish insecurities, but it masks the fact that these oppressive and unjust policies and actions sow resentment that guarantees Israel's eternal insecurity. Even worse, some of Israel's supporters in the United States and elsewhere apparently feel obliged to become general partisans of discrimination and racial profiling, or collective punishment, or torture, or imprisonment without due process, or all of the above. Thus, if the Jewish question is resolved through the establishment by force of a Jewish state in what was an Arab land, then the maintenance of this state in the face of the natural, understandable resentment of those harmed in the process involves its supporters not only in justifying the unjustifiable in Israel and Palestine but by logical extension also in justifying it in the United States, in Guantánamo, and in Iraq and Afghanistan. This is a sad result not only for those who have sought a remedy for an age-old problem but also for those dismayed at the new problems this solution has created and the ripple effect of this solution far from Israel or Palestine.

Another thing has become clearer and clearer over these sixty years: a just resolution of the Palestine question will be far from simple, if it is indeed possible at all; and if it is ever to be resolved, this will depend in large measure on the Palestinians themselves, whose current status is perhaps as desperate as it has been since 1948. Such a resolution will not be simple, because the now universally applauded two-state solution faces the juggernaut of Israel's actions in the occupied territories over more than forty years, actions that have been expressly designed to make its realization in any meaningful form impossible. This is true whether those actions involve the unending process of the meticulously planned and state-supported colonization and effective annexation of slice after slice of the West Bank, the isolation of Arab East Jerusalem from its hinterland in the West Bank, the systematic confinement of more than 2 million Palestinians living there in smaller and smaller and ever more hermetically sealed cantons, or the cancerous growth of what might be called an Israeli prison-industrial complex. This military, security, state and private apparatus controls most of the important decisions in the lives of the nearly 4 million Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, who are about to enter their forty-second year of military occupation, and it has harbored a Palestinian prison population of about 10,000 since 2000.

In principle this juggernaut is, of course, not unstoppable. There is, however, no sign that its momentum has slowed in

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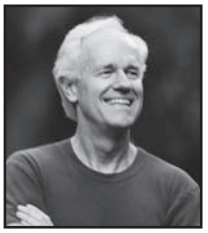

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the past seventeen years (since the Madrid conference) of the cruelly misnamed "peace process," let alone recognition of its vast power, or a willingness to confront and reverse it, on the part of most Israeli, American or other decision-makers. The deceitful, feeble silence of US policy under three administrations about this juggernaut, and the mass media's attitude that the emperor's clothes look just splendid, would be nauseating if one was not already accustomed to this sort of feckless, insouciant irresponsibility on the part of Washington, and of the American media's complicity with it.

While the two-state solution is thus deeply flawed—if it has not become unrealizable—there are also flaws in the alternatives, grouped under the rubric of the one-state solution. How can most Israelis and Palestinians be persuaded to forgo their aspirations for a state of their own, and to overcome their dislike of each other such that they can contemplate living together in one state, whether binational, federal, cantonal or unitary? How would it be possible to reverse the ideological triumph of Zionism, which convinced Israelis and others that the main lesson of the Holocaust is that there must be a Jewish state (while in the same breath they are told that this state will have to fight for its existence against an environment rendered permanently hostile by the conditions of its establishment and maintenance)? How would it be possible to reverse the process whereby all Palestinian political formations of any consequence have gradually become wedded to the idea that the establishment of a Palestinian state in 22 percent of historic Palestine—via the reversal of forty-one years of Israeli occupation practices carried out with the acquiescence of the United States and that render the creation of such a state virtually impossible—would be an acceptable solution to the question of Palestine? This was true first of Fatah, and then of more radical Palestinian groups like the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and is now true even of Hamas.

Moving toward a two-state, or a one-state, solution or toward any other resolution of the Palestine question—that is, getting the Palestinians out of the parlous state they are currently in—is dependent on a reversal in the dynamic of the Palestinian polity. For several years, this has been spiraling downward, and it now seems to be nearly in free-fall. Only when the Palestinians were united, when they had some sense of what their national strategy was, and when they chose tactics appropriate to that strategy, did they have any success at all, minimal though it has been, over the past forty-one years, the past sixty years—indeed, over the past ninety years. The Palestinians were most emphatically not united around a clear strategy and appropriate tactics during the British Mandate until 1948 or during the two decades afterward, nor have they been for the past decade or so, both periods that have been disastrous for them. Even during the era from the heyday of the PLO in the late 1960s through the first intifada of 1987–91, when the Palestinians gained broad international legitimacy and sympathy, and grudging recognition from Israel, this unity and strategic clarity were flawed in many ways.

In particular, Palestinians lacked clarity about the moral, legal and political disadvantages in the use of violence against an Israeli polity able to mobilize in defense of its actions, however unspeakable, the most powerful tropes of victimhood in modern Western culture. This confusion among some Palestinians exists although farsighted thinkers like Edward Said and Eqbal Ahmad understood decades ago that nonviolent resistance was integral to Palestinian success; although the greatest successes of the Palestinians were won by the unarmed popular protests of the first intifada; and despite widespread (but underreported) peaceful joint Palestinian-Israeli protest movements against Israel's illegal wall inside the West Bank. Many Palestinians understandably cling to the legitimate right of any people under occupation to resist their oppressors. They see only the extensive, continuous violence directed by Israel against the Palestinians, much of it structural and integral to the maintenance of the occupation. They cannot understand that because of Israel's cloak of permanent victimhood, its massive violence remains either invisible or justified in the West, while every Israeli casualty seems to be mourned there with infinite sadness and is taken as another sign of the inherent barbarity of the Palestinians.

Today we are witness to the spectacle of two feeble and clueless Palestinian political movements, fighting like two cocks on a garbage heap.

Today we are witness to the spectacle of two feeble and clueless Palestinian political movements, both lacking strategic vision and bereft of the selfless patriotism that would lead them to bury their petty differences, fighting like two cocks on a garbage heap, as the Arabic expression has it. They do so although overwhelming majorities of Palestinians have consistently demanded that they compromise with each other in the interest of national unity. The Fatah-dominated Palestinian Authority has abandoned any idea of popular mobilization, any last shred of an ethos of service to the people, any sense of the vital importance of national unity if even minimal Palestinian objectives are to be achieved, any respect for the democratic process that brought its rivals in Hamas into power in January 2006, and any sense of the danger of hitching the Palestinians to the bankrupt policies of a lame-duck American President who heads the most pro-Israeli Administration in US history.

The blindness of Hamas is as bad: neither able to fight nor to negotiate effectively, neither able to compromise with Fatah nor to govern on its own, and no more able to break free of the clutches of its external backers than is Fatah vis-à-vis its own foreign backers, Hamas has lurched from disaster to disaster since its unexpected victory in the 2006 elections. Undermined by the refusal of the United States and Israel even to attempt to negotiate with a Hamas-dominated government, last summer it made the fatal mistake of taking over the Gaza Strip in response to preparations for a US-supported coup by Fatah strongman Muhammad Dahlan. Hamas reached a low point in April, when a poll showed that it enjoyed the support of less than 18 percent of Palestinians

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Christian religious objects, Jewish religious objects, Siva as Nataraja, a Vietnamese Buddha, and an Islamic mosque in Nairobi Kenya

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(versus 32 percent for Fatah, whose leader, Mahmoud Abbas, however, is even more unpopular than Ismail Haniya of Hamas: 11.7 percent to 13.3 percent). The ideological bankruptcy and the degree of popular rejection of both of the formations that dominate Palestinian politics are illustrated by the fact that together they enjoy the support of barely 50 percent of Palestinians.

If there is to be a resolution of the Palestine problem, it depends on the Palestinians' understanding the massive disadvantages they labor under in fighting a struggle for liberation against the heirs of the victims of the Holocaust, in the growing shadow of worldwide Islamophobia. It depends on their unity and on their adopting the appropriate strategy and tactics for this difficult task, in mobilizing the powerful moral force of their cause and the remarkable strengths of Palestinians under occupation and in the diaspora who have withstood extreme pressures but have neither submitted nor despaired. These strengths must be deployed not just for a defensive steadfastness but for a positive goal of liberation, peace and justice, one that can change the terms of the conflict and the way it is understood, and win over enough of their opponents and enough of the outside world to change the unfavorable balance of forces that today keeps them scattered, dispersed, confined and imprisoned sixty years after the destruction of Arab Palestine. ■

Juan Crow in Georgia

Immigrant Latinos live under a matrix of oppressive laws, customs and institutions.

by ROBERTO LOVATO

Justeen Mancha's dream of becoming a psychologist was born of the tropical heat and exploitation that have shaped farmworker life around Reidsville, Georgia, for centuries. The wiry, freckle-faced 17-year-old high school junior has toiled in drought-dry onion fields to help her mother, Maria Christina Martinez. But early one September morning in 2006, Mancha's dream was abruptly deferred.

From the living room of the battered trailer she and her mother call home, Mancha described what happened when she came out of the shower that morning. "My mother went out, and I was alone," she said. "I was getting ready for school, getting dressed, when I heard this noise. I thought it was my mother coming back." She went on in the Tex-Mex Spanish-inflected Georgia accent now heard throughout Dixie: "Some people were slamming car doors outside the trailer. I heard footsteps and then a loud boom and then somebody screaming, asking if we were 'illegals,' 'Mexicans.' These big men were standing in my living room holding guns. One man blocked my doorway. Another guy grabbed a gun on his side. I freaked out. 'Oh, my God!' I yelled."

As more than twenty Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents surrounded the trailer, said Mancha, agents inside interrogated her. They asked her where her mother was; they wanted to know if her mother was "Mexican" and whether she had "papers" or a green card. They told her they were looking for "illegals."

After about five minutes of interrogation, the agents—who, according to the women's lawyer, Mary Bauer of the Southern Poverty Law Center, showed no warrants and had neither probable cause nor consent to enter the home—simply left. They left in all likelihood because Mancha and her mother didn't fit the profile of the workers at the nearby Crider poultry plant, who had been targeted by the raid in nearby Stilwell. They were the wrong kind of "Mexicans"; they were US citizens.

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Justeen Mancha with her mother, Maria Christina Martinez, at a news conference in Atlanta, November 2006

Though she had experienced discrimination before the raid—in the fields, in the supermarket and in school—Mancha, who testified before Congress in February, never imagined such an incident would befall her, since she and her mother had migrated from Texas to Reidsville. Best known for harvesting poultry and agricultural products, Reidsville, a farm town about 200 miles southeast of Atlanta, is also known for harvesting Klan culture behind the walls of the state's oldest and largest prison. But its most famous former inmate is Jim Crow slayer and dreamer Martin Luther King Jr. His example inspires Mancha's new dream: lawyering "for the poor."

The toll this increasingly oppressive climate has taken on Mancha represents but a small part of its effects on noncitizen immigrants, especially undocumented immigrants, and other Latinos. Mancha and the younger children of the mostly immigrant Latinos in Georgia are learning and internalizing that

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they are different from white—and black—children not just because they have the wrong skin color but also because many of their parents lack the right papers. They are growing up in a racial and political climate in which Latinos' subordinate status in Georgia and in the Deep South bears more than a passing resemblance to that of African-Americans who were living under Jim Crow. Call it Juan Crow: the matrix of laws, social customs, economic institutions and symbolic systems enabling the physical and psychic isolation needed to control and exploit undocumented immigrants. Listening to the effects of Juan Crow on immigrants and citizens like Mancha ("I can't sleep sometimes because of nightmares," she says. "My arms still twitch. I see ICE agents and men in uniform, and it still scares me") reminds me of the trauma I heard among the men, women and children controlled and exploited by state violence in wartime El Salvador. Juan Crow has roots in the US South, but it stirs traumas bred in the hemispheric South.

In fact, the surge in Latino migration (the Southeast is home to the fastest-growing Latino population in the United States) is moving many of the institutions and actors responsible for enforcing Jim Crow to resurrect and reconfigure themselves in line with new demographics. Along with the almost daily arrests, raids and home invasions by federal, state and other authorities, newly resurgent civilian groups like the Ku Klux Klan, in addition to more than 144 new "nativist extremist" groups and 300 anti-immigrant organizations born in the past three years, mostly based in the South, are harassing immigrants as a way to grow their ranks.

Meanwhile, a legal regime of distinctions between the rights of undocumented immigrants and citizens has emerged and is being continually refined and expanded. A 2006 Georgia law denies undocumented immigrants driver's licenses. Federal laws that allowed local and state authorities to pursue blacks under the Fugitive Slave Act appear to be the model for the Bush Administration's Agreements of Cooperation in Communities to Enhance Safety and Security (ACCESS) program, which allows states to deputize law enforcement officials to chase, detain, arrest and jail the undocumented. Georgia's lowest-paid workers, the undocumented, now occupy a separate, unequal and clandestine place that has made it increasingly difficult for them to work, rent homes or attend school.

The pre- and post-Reconstruction regional economic system centered on the stately Southern mansions that once graced Atlanta's storied Peachtree Street has given way to a more global finance–driven system centered on the cold, anonymous skyscrapers that loom over Peachtree today. And in a more hopeful sign, some veterans of the civil rights struggle against Jim Crow are joining Latino immigrants in what will likely be one of the major movements of the twenty-first century.

These and other facets of immigrant life in Georgia, the Deep South and the entire country are but a small part of the labyrinthine institutional and cultural arrangements defining the strange career of Juan Crow.

The immigrant condition in Georgia worsened in the wake of the failed immigration reform proposal last year. The national immigration debate had the effect of further legitimizing and emboldening the most extreme elements of the anti-immigrant movement in places like Georgia. Since the advent of what he terms "Georgiafornia," for example, D.A. King, a former marine and contributor to the anti-immigrant hate site VDARE, has leapfrogged into the national limelight to become one of the major advocates for deportation and security-only "immigration reform." Strengthened by the defeat of national reform, King, State Senator Chip Rogers and a growing galaxy of formerly fringe groups succeeded in getting some of the country's most draconian anti-immigrant laws passed. These new racial codes are disguised by the national security–infused bureaucratic language of laws with names like the Georgia Security and Immigration Compliance Act (GSICA).

Their efforts were egged on by the Bush Administration's implementation of the ACCESS program last August. ACCESS provided new excuses for state and local officials to pursue the undocumented in states like Georgia. In tandem with the federal government, King and Rogers led the push to pass GSICA, which requires law enforcement officers to investigate the citizenship status of anyone charged with a felony or driving under the influence. GSICA and federal efforts laid the foundation on which the other legal and social structures of Juan Crow grow.

The national immigration debate had the effect of legitimizing and emboldening the most extreme anti-immigrant forces in places like Georgia.

Georgia's estimated 500,000 undocumented immigrants must think twice before seeking emergency support at hospitals or clinics because of laws that require them to prove their legal status before receiving many state benefits. "No-match letter" regulations requiring all employers to confirm the Social Security numbers of their employees have been issued by the Social Security Administration and have resulted in firings and growing fear among immigrants. But even without the no-match letters, undocumented immigrants in Georgia have many reasons to fear going to work. If they work at a company with more than 500 employees, for example (and most undocumented immigrants are employed in meatpacking, agricultural, carpet and other industries with hundreds, sometimes thousands, of workers), they must worry about laws that punish employers who knowingly hire undocumented immigrants and mandate that firms with state contracts check the immigration status of their employees. Similar laws denying or restricting housing, education, transportation and other aspects of immigrant life are also being instituted across Georgia.

For a firsthand look at how the interplay of state and federal policies fuels Juan Crow, one need go no further than the immigrant-heavy area surrounding Buford Highway in DeKalb County, near Atlanta. During the weekend of October 18, 2007, the Georgia Latino Alliance for Human Rights (GLAHR) and other advocacy groups from across the state reported sharp

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increases in arrests of immigrants in the area. "This weekend alone we received more than 200 phone calls from people telling horrible stories of arrests," said GLAHR executive director Adelina Nicholls of Mexico City. "There are hundreds of Latinos who've been hunted down like animals, taken to jail, and they don't even know why or whether or not they'll be released," said Nicholls more recently.

Nicholls and other advocates are working feverishly in response to the exponential increase in official and extra-official profiling of immigrants. Last year there were forty-four reported armed robberies of DeKalb County–area Latino immigrants in August alone. One especially outrageous incident took place just west of Atlanta, in the rural town of Carrollton, last June. Emelina Ramirez, a Honduran immigrant, called local police to report that her roommates were attacking her, punching and kicking her in the stomach. Ramirez was pregnant. Locals say that when police got to Ramirez's apartment, officers handcuffed her, took her to jail and then ran her fingerprints through a federal database. After discovering that she was undocumented, they contacted federal authorities as stipulated under ACCESS and GSICA. Ramirez was then deported.

Nicholls says she and GLAHR staff exist in a perpetual state of exhaustion after having to expand their DeKalb County work to deal with cases like Ramirez's. Adding to their load is the situation in nearby Cobb County, where the local jail has 500 adults captured on streets, at work and in their homes. All of these people, says Nicholls, are awaiting deportation.

Beneath the growing fear and racial tensions of Georgia lies the new, more globalized economic system that sustains Juan Crow.

Beneath the growing fear and intensifying racial tensions of Georgia lies the new, more globalized economic system that sustains Juan Crow. At the core of the economy in Dixie are the financial dealings taking place in the shiny towers of Peachtree Street, buildings constructed atop the ashes of plantation houses.

Lining Peachtree today are SunTrust, Bank of America and other titans of global finance with major operations in downtown Atlanta. Along with the financial players of Charlotte, North Carolina, the companies occupying the towers on Peachtree are among the prime movers behind the transformation and restructuring of the Georgia economy—and of its race relations. On Peachtree you can find US banks and financial firms investing in companies doing business in post-NAFTA Latin America, where nonunion labor and miserably low wages drive immigration to Georgia and other states. The investment portfolios of many of these companies have grown fat with high-yield investments in the poultry, meatpacking, rug, tourism and other Georgia industries employing undocumented immigrants from Mexico and Latin America. The need to keep down the wages of these undocumented workers is fulfilled with the legal, political and psychological discipline of Juan Crow. Along with the most visible legacy of Jim Crow—Georgia's massive and growing population of black prisoners, housed in Reidsville and other, mostly rural prisons—the Peachtree State's undocumented immigrants find themselves at the bottom of the South's new political and economic order.

By keeping down wages of the undocumented and documented workforce, Juan Crow doesn't just pit undocumented Latino workers against black and white workers. It also makes possible every investor's dream of merging Third World wages with First World amenities. Promotional brochures put out by the state's Department of Economic Development, for example, tout Georgia's "below average" wages and its status as a "right to work" (nonunion) state. Georgia's infrastructure, its proximity to US markets and its incentives—nonunion labor, low wages, government subsidies, cheap land—allow the state to position itself as an attractive investment opportunity for foreign companies. While the fortunes of Ford, GM and other US companies have declined in the South, the fortunes of foreign automakers here are rising. Companies like Korean car manufacturer Kia, which plans to open a $1.2 billion plant by 2009, see in Georgia and other Southern states a new pool of cheap labor. Of the $5.7 billion of total new investment in Georgia in 2006, more than 36 percent was from international companies—companies that were also responsible for nearly half of the 24,660 jobs created by government-supported foreign ventures that year.

Also critical to the economic strategies formulated in the towers on Peachtree Street is another Latin-centered component: free trade with Latin America. "We are the gateway to the Americas," boasted Kenneth Stewart, commissioner of the Georgia Department of Economic Development. Stewart was among the more than 1,000 people, including three US Cabinet members and finance ministers, trade representatives, investors, corporate executives and politicians from thirty-three countries in the hemisphere, who attended the sold-out Americas Competitiveness Forum at the Marriott on Peachtree Street last June. As an organizer of the event, the gregarious Stewart, like many of the region's economic leaders, considers hosting the forum a critical part of Atlanta's bid to become the secretariat of the Free Trade Area of the Americas organization. Local elites support building a $10 million, privately financed FTAA headquarters complex, possibly in the area near Peachtree and the Sweet Auburn neighborhood.

Before being rapidly gentrified by the white-collar employees working in the Peachtree towers, Sweet Auburn, the birthplace of Martin Luther King Jr., was one of the cradles of the African-American freedom struggle. Echoing the connection frequently made here between increased globalization and commerce and improved race relations, Stewart told me that free trade "will benefit citizens of Georgia and the citizens of Mexico and other Latin American countries." But when I asked him about the increased racial tensions, including the murders of some immigrants in Georgia, and about the growing repression of noncitizen Mexican workers, Stewart abruptly ended the interview.

For her part, Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin—among the most recent in a long line of African-American Atlanta mayors that includes former Martin Luther King colleague and Wal-

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Mart consultant Andrew Young (who has an office in a Peachtree high-rise)—also linked local freedom struggles with global free trade. Before the Americas Competitiveness Forum, she and other regional elites distributed splashy brochures promoting the city's FTAA bid. Included in the brochure was a picture of the headstone of King's grave, which bears the inscription FREE AT LAST. FREE AT LAST. THANK GOD ALMIGHTY I'M FREE AT LAST. The brochure promoting "the city too busy to hate" also paints a positive, global Kumbaya picture of the plight of Georgia's migrants: "With its attractive quality of life and rapidly expanding job market, Metro Atlanta draws thousands of newcomers every year and has growing Latin, Asian and African American communities."

"This is the home of Dr. King," said Franklin in her welcome speech at the packed forum. "It is in the spirit of peace, it is in the spirit of collaboration and it is in the spirit of fairness that we attack this issue of [economic] competitiveness," she told her audience in King-like cadences. But had Franklin taken her foreign visitors on the short stroll from their hotel to Sweet Auburn, they would not have found the racial harmony described in the glossy brochures and spirited speeches.

Documented and undocumented Latinos dealing with the economic and political effects of Juan Crow in Georgia (and across the country) find themselves unwitting actors in a centuries-old racial drama, which they must alter if Juan Crow is to be defeated. The major difference today is that Latinos also find themselves having to navigate a racial and political topography that is no longer black and white. Young Latinos, in particular, attend schools that teach them about Jim Crow while giving them a daily dose of Juan Crow.

High school senior Ernesto Chávez (a pseudonym) does not look forward to becoming one of the few undocumented students in Georgia to go to a university like Kennesaw State, which requires them to carry student IDs with special color coding, or to a college that denies them aid and forces them to pay exorbitant, nearly impossible-to-pay out-of-state tuition. He has already learned enough about Jim Crow—and Juan Crow—in high school.

Chávez, who sports a buzz cut and wears baggy clothes, said that when he studied Jim Crow in school, he identified strongly with the heroic generation of African-American youth who rebelled against it. "They couldn't ride in the same trains, they couldn't drink from the same fountains," he said during an interview in a classroom at Miller Grove High School in the Atlanta suburb of Lithonia. "I felt mad when I read about that, even though they weren't my people," said the soft-spoken Mexican, who is part of the small but growing minority of Latinos at Miller Grove (African-American students make up about 93 percent of the student body).

Chávez said he came to know the limits of his physical, social and psychic mobility, thanks to the Georgia law that requires people to show proof of citizenship or legal status in order to obtain a driver's license. "It's hard to describe what it feels like to be 'illegal' here in Georgia. It's like you can't move," he said, his voice cracking slightly. "It feels scary because you know that when you go out to a public place, you might never know if you're going to come back. I'm really scared because my mother drives without a license. She's scared too."

Chávez and other Latino students also expressed their shock and dismay at being discriminated against by some of the descendants of those discriminated against by Jim Crow.

"When I first got here, I was confused. I went to a mostly white school in Gwinnett County and started noticing the fifth-grade kids saying things to me, racial stuff, asking me questions like, 'Are you illegal?'" said Chávez as he fidgeted nervously in one of those ubiquitous and visibly uncomfortable school desks. "But when I was in seventh grade, I went to Richards Middle School, where it wasn't the white people saying things, it was black people. They didn't like Mexican kids. They would call us 'Mexican border hoppers,' 'wetbacks' and all these things. Every time they'd see me, they yelled at me, threatened to beat me up after school for no reason at all." Asked how it felt, he said, "It's like, now since they have rights, they can discriminate [against] others."

Chávez's family, along with many immigrant families in Georgia, will be watching closely to see how the state's justice system deals with the still-pending 2005 case of six Mexican farmworkers killed execution-style in their trailers, which were parked near the cotton and peanut farms they toiled on in Tifton. Pretrial motions began last July in the case, in which prosecutors allege that four African-American men bludgeoned five of the immigrants to death with aluminum baseball bats and shot one in the head while robbing them in their trailer home. Though the face of anti-immigrant racism in the Juan Crow South is still overwhelmingly identified as white by the immigrants I interviewed, some immigrants also see a black face on anti-immigrant hate.

> 'It's hard to describe what it feels like to be "illegal" here in Georgia. It's like you can't move,' says high school senior Ernesto Chávez.

Politically, a growing divide has emerged between pro- and anti-immigrant blacks in Georgia. The African-American face of Juan Crow is embodied by State Senator and probable Democratic Atlanta mayoral candidate Kasim Reed (he's also considering a gubernatorial bid). Reed proposed a five-year prison sentence for anyone caught trying to secure employment with a false ID. Local Latino and African-American activists have criticized Reed for what Bruce Dixon of the online *Black Agenda Report* called his "morally bankrupt attempt to outflank Republicans on the right."

Activists like Janvieve Williams of the US Human Rights Network, based in Atlanta, counter the anti-immigrant tide by elevating the tone of the debate and shifting the terms to human rights. As an Afro-Panamanian immigrant, Williams says she feels discrimination from many whites in Georgia, but she also experiences discrimination from mestizo immigrants. Her perception of anti-immigrant sentiments among African-Americans

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adds another layer to the complex racial dynamics unleashed by Juan Crow. "I'm caught between African-Americans who don't want to understand immigration and immigrants and Latinos who use words like 'moreno,' 'negritos,' 'los negros' and other terms that are not good," says Williams.

But rather than see her Afro-Latino identity and her Latin American political experience as a barrier between communities, Williams—who co-hosts *Radio Diaspora*, a weekly Afro-Latino program that helped promote the 50,000-plus immigrants' rights marches in 2006—uses Latin American media and organizing experience to cross linguistic and political borders. "We need to move from civil rights to human rights. We need to start using the language and tools of human rights around the issue of immigration. It's an international issue that needs an international framework," says Williams, whose organization co-sponsored the visit to Atlanta last May by the United Nations special rapporteur on the human rights of migrants. Williams's organization brought together many groups who shared stories of Juan Crow with the special rapporteur, who took his report to the UN General Assembly.

In the same way that the concept of civil rights grew as a response to Jim Crow, the human rights framework advocated by Williams and other immigrants' rights activists in the South and across the country challenges traditional approaches to race and rights. "Some civil rights leaders here don't think human rights affects us in the United States," says Williams. "A lot of the [civil rights] elders of that movement are not linked to the human rights movement, and that also gets in the way of working together."

Not all of Georgia's civil rights elders fit thirtysomething Williams's description. The Rev. Joseph Lowery, the lieutenant to Martin Luther King Jr., says he did not perceive the threat that some whites and African-American Georgians felt from the massive immigrant marches of 2006; instead he sees in the millions marching in Atlanta and across the country "instruments of God's will to change this country." Reverend Lowery, who now leads the Georgia Coalition for the People's Agenda, has spoken eloquently and vociferously against what he considers "wicked" immigration policies and has attended pro-immigrant rallies. He believes that massive immigration to the United States came about because of the workings within the tall buildings like those in spitting distance of his office in the historic Atlanta Life building on Auburn Avenue. "We've globalized money, we've globalized trade and commerce, but we haven't globalized fairness toward work and labor. The solution to the 'problem' of immigration and other problems is globalization of justice," he said.

Speaking of the relationship between American blacks and Latino immigrants, Lowery said, "There are many differences between our experience and that of immigrant Latinos—but there is a family resemblance between Jim Crow and what is being experienced by immigrants. Both met economic oppression. Both met racial and ethnic hostility.

"But the most important thing to remember," said Lowery, as if casting out the demons of Juan and Jim Crow, "is that, though we may have come over on different ships, we're all in the same damn boat now." ■

Letters

(continued from page 2)

to being complicit in the illegal overthrow of the Kingdom, that the Hawaiian people never gave up their sovereignty and that the ceded lands taken from the crown and the Hawaiian government are held in trust by the state. Under the Apology Resolution, all the issues raised by the historical record are to be resolved within a reconciliation process between the Hawaiian people and the United States government.

As the Hawaiian people take steps to form their government and restore their nation, the need for education and awareness in the United States will be essential. Your publication of the essay on the history to date contributed to that goal. Aloha,

Lanny Sinkin

Honolulu

Way before the five families conned their queen into abdicating, King Kamehameha of the Big Island took Captain Cook's cannon and conquered the peaceful original inhabitants of Māui and O'ahu. King Kalaninanaole's people—men, women and children—were killed outright in the final battle above the Pali on the Island of O'ahu and their bodies thrown over the cliff. My family, some of the original Tahitians and Samoans who inhabited these islands, will never call themselves Hawaiian. Just as Okinawans don't call themselves Japanese, or Apache call themselves American.

Donald Kamaka'a Oberloh

Honolulu

Elinor Langer's piece on *pilikia* (troubles) in Hawai'i is excellent. Thank you. *The New York Illustrated* wrote in 1898, "One of the last things ex-Queen Liliuokalani did before the American flag was hoisted…was to give a farewell lua." "Lua," a common word for "outdoor toilet," was an unfortunate misspelling of "luau," a native feast. The article continued: "On this occasion the hula dance was given. This dance was made unlawful by authorities of the Hawaiian Republic (whites who overthrew the queen), but it was practiced secretly." The article is correct. Hawai'i's property rights were vested to the United States, and Hawaiians felt their birthright was stolen.

J. Arthur Rath, *author*, Lost Generations: A Boy, a School, a Princess

Makaha, Hawai'i

I was born and raised among native Hawaiians, and the pain of disenfranchisement has had a devastating effect upon the islands' people to this day. Yet there is no going back, either for the native Manhattans of New York or for native Hawaiians ["Hawai'i Needs You," April 28].

What is possible, however, are specific programs, lands and areas where some type of native sovereignty can exist within the larger framework of a democratic state. This will not be an easy task. But to do less is a grave injustice, unworthy of the great tenets upon which this great country was founded.

Bill Hambaro

New York City

Many thanks for your issue on the Hawaiian Kingdom and the independence movement. It's ironic that so many Americans are focused these days on protesting China's subjugation of Tibet, yet they suffer from amnesia about their own history of imperialism and genocide against native peoples, including Hawaiians.

Kaonohi Tan

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Books & the Arts.

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Wartime life in London, August 1940

The Counter-Family

by CHRIS LEHMANN

Readers expecting a new installment in Jonathan Coe's ambitious sequence of novels launched with *The Rotters' Club* in 2003 will likely be taken aback by *The Rain Before It Falls*. *The Rotters' Club* and its 2005 sequel, *The Closed Circle*, formed a kind of collective *Bildungsroman* for Coe's generation of late-born British boomers, pitching personal dramas, compromises and disappointments against a capacious backdrop of capital-h history—IRA bombings, Labour defeats, work stoppages, internationally financed factory takeovers and the triumphs of Margaret Thatcher and Tony Blair. Those works, like Coe's exuberant breakthrough novel, *What a Carve Up!* (released in the United States as *The Winshaw Legacy*), also made prodigious use of the pop-cultural backdrop to these political transformations—so that, for example, the collapse of Harold Wilson's Labour government in 1970 or the resurgence of IRA terrorism tracks seamlessly alongside the spread of shitty, developmentally arrested prog rock.

Unlike other writers working the same kind of material while afflicted with an overbroad weakness for satire—such as the ever-lamentable Jay McInerney—Coe never lets his fictional visions descend into sniping for sniping's sake: mining the stuff of recent history for unseemly acts of self-advertisement isn't Coe's game. Rather, for all his unsparing wit, he takes great pains to portray his characters as tragically unable to move their lives forward, pinioned as they are by the absurd superstitions of British class and cultural life. The world of *The Rotters' Club* and *The Closed Circle* is one where working-class kids have few options for voicing their core dissatisfactions with life save to stage destructive sexual psychodramas—or, worse, to perform in bands with names like Gandalf's Staff.

But none of that charged political material occupies the stage in *The Rain Before It Falls*, a deceptively quiet study of family life across four generations. To be sure, the London Blitz is a prime mover of the novel's plot—putting its chief narrator, a dying woman named Rosamond, in the company of her cousin Beatrix as she repatriates from the outskirts of Birmingham to Shropshire, where she takes up with Beatrix's farm-owning family in order to escape German bombing attacks. (Coe, by the way, has clearly cribbed this plot point from the life of B.S. Johnson, the great postwar experimental novelist and childhood Blitz evacuee, who was the subject of Coe's excellent biography *Like a Fiery Elephant*.) But Rosamond, by her own admission, has throughout her life been "capable of, but not interested in, understanding the events that were unfolding around me in the wider world." She's far more apt to find meaning in a change of weather than in a change of government and, in lieu of bleak ruminations on Labour's collapse, to detect "moral coarseness" in the unthinking slights of a husband toward a wife or—most of all—in the unbidden cruelties mothers can visit on their daughters.

For *The Rain Before It Falls* is also, quite pointedly, a "women's novel"—putting it in different company from the main plot movers in the past two Coe outings: adulterous political leaders, violent union thugs, cynical journalists—all men heaving their Big Political Preoccupations quite loudly (if also futilely) into History's onrushing tide. Last fall, when the novel was published in Britain, Coe wrote in the *Guardian* that it

The Rain Before It Falls
By Jonathan Coe.
Knopf. 240 pp. $23.95.

Chris Lehmann is an editor at Bookforum *and* Congressional Quarterly.

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was "intended (among other things) as an hommage" to the Virago Modern Classics roster of Modernist women's literature: books that adumbrated the multiple confinements—psychological, political and economic—women experienced in the separate domestic sphere of (mainly) well-born British life. Reviewing the achievements of the first Virago writer he encountered—Dorothy Richardson, author of *Pilgrimage*, a thirteen-volume sequence about women coming of age with the new twentieth century—Coe wrote that Richardson adopted a deliberately elliptical narrative style, one that didn't move in conventional linear chronology but rather sideways and by accretion, an account of life "in which every incident is just a small variation on every other incident."

So it is in *The Rain Before It Falls*, the chronicle of an outsider looking in on the destructive course of a close relation's life, and the yet more fatal family legacies arising from the core resentments that cousin Beatrix carries out of her childhood. It's also the revelation of a submerged family history—the last testament of Rosamond to a girl named Imogen, who has been unaware that she's Beatrix's grandchild, thanks to a crushing act of abuse in Imogen's early childhood at the hands of her mother (Beatrix's daughter Thea) that has exiled her into a foster family's orbit.

All this material arises, fittingly enough, from a classic sort of domestic errand: after Rosamond dies in the wake of a long coronary illness, her middle-aged niece Gill is appointed executor of the estate. Doing battle with the clutter of Rosamond's rural Shropshire home, she discovers a stack of recently recorded cassette tapes placed close to the chair where Rosamond's doctor found her dead. Also close by is a note in Rosamond's hand, addressed to Gill: "These are for Imogen." But Gill recalls the girl only from a single encounter, when Imogen was 8 or 9, and a mysterious guest at Rosamond's fiftieth birthday party; repeated efforts to locate her come up empty, and at length, following the instructions in Rosamond's will, Gill resolves to listen to the tapes herself—in the company of her two grown daughters, on a visit to see one of them perform a flute recital at a London church.

Imogen is blind, which accounts for the taping of Rosamond's testament, as well as the somewhat perverse framing device the old woman adopts for her reminiscences: descriptions of twenty photographs of family interest, since Imogen has been denied any visual record "of where you come from, and of the forces that made you," as Rosamond explains. This device, not incidentally, also allows Coe to carry on the traditional novelist's business of providing detailed descriptions of landscapes, architecture and the physical features of main characters without it seeming quite so artificial in a long monologue transcript.

Like most seemingly measured accounts of a family's past, Rosamond's testimonial gradually widens into the stuff of roiling pathology—but the effect of the unstinting, ur-British tidiness of Rosamond's voice (even in a casually recorded setting with occasional breaks for alcoholic refreshment) is that she imparts an unnerving texture of the everyday to actions and events that are anything but. Occasionally, Rosamond pauses to note this odd juxtaposition of high melodrama and recitations of mainly domestic tableaux: "Does it help you, Imogen, to understand any of this, if I describe so minutely the things that you will never be able to see? Does it help you to understand why your grandmother walked out on your grandfather in the autumn of 1949, and took your infant mother along with her, and dragged her round Ireland in a gipsy caravan for more than three years?"

Coe pays homage to the Virago Modern Classics roster of Modernist women's fiction.

Lord knows. But for Coe's readers, these casual jolts of melodrama help prevent Rosamond's narrative—which is, after all, the saga of four generations of women testing the way that their lives have been circumscribed in small rural settings—from straying into the ready-made Oprah niche of didactic uplift. It also helps that Rosamond is by no means a standard-issue lovable eccentric from similar stories of recovery and pluck such as Elizabeth Gilbert's *Eat, Pray, Love* and Ann-Marie Macdonald's *Fall on Your Knees*. She is, rather, possessed of an arch, fatalistic and—rare for a Coe character—not especially humorous voice. Summoning up the end of Beatrix's three-year gypsy affair, for example, Rosamond notes that her paramour had been "under the happy impression that Beatrix was hard at work, waiting tables in the Castle Hotel, while in fact she had been out carousing and canoodling with this Canadian businessman whom she had met on her second night there. When this discrepancy came to light," she notes briskly, "there was—as you might suppose—an almighty row, and that was that." You can almost picture her clapping her hands in uptending motions, the high-British gesture of a messy or unpleasant task discharged.

But if Rosamond can seem inattentive to (or, better yet, inconvenienced by) high romantic dramas, she's also a close observer of the arguably deeper, more resonant currents that inform them from within. As Beatrix remained in thrall to doomed, self-dramatizing romantic gestures, Rosamond sums up her increasingly unstable cousin thus: "Half of the time she behaved with a kind of desperate levity and high-spiritedness, but this could easily switch, without warning, into savagery."

Much of that savagery gets trained on women close at hand, in the great tradition of Virago fiction dissecting the ills of the domestic sphere. Beatrix is especially bent on tormenting Thea, the daughter from her first, virtual shotgun wedding. As Beatrix pursues some high-spirited romantic machinations overseas, she parks the not quite 5-year-old girl with Rosamond, whom she largely ignored during her three-year bohemian sabbatical from provincial Northern English life. Unbeknownst to both women, this careless action will furnish a fateful dividing line in their lives, with its aftereffects creating awful, unanticipated legacies across the generations.

For one thing, as she becomes Thea's guardian, Rosamond is also well into her own momentous (if less flamboyant) odyssey of self-discovery: after breaking off a college engagement, she sets up housekeeping in a cramped London flat with another woman, Rebecca, realizing at the height of Britain's postwar cult of domesticity that she's a lesbian. As the couple's stint as Thea's caretakers stretches from weeks into years, they're vouchsafed a most anomalous vision of an unstunted, restorative family life: coming to love Thea almost as their own daughter, they imagine providing her with the sort of abiding acceptance—and domestic stability—that Beatrix can never manage.

But as Rosamond's narration mercilessly reveals, that fugitive arrangement was indeed little more than a vision. In the scene that furnishes the book's title, the all-female family decamps to the Auvergne countryside in France on a holiday; as a storm threatens one blissful afternoon, Thea announces her childish preference for merely threatened rain. When Rosamond

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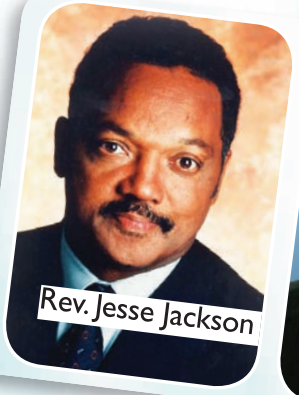
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pedantically says that there's no such thing—that precipitation must, you know, precipitate—Thea proudly retorts, "Something can still make you happy, can't it, even if it isn't real?"

Not for long, as Thea's counter-family soon learns. Just as suddenly as Beatrix descended to dump Thea in the couple's laps, she returns—overseas romantic mission finally accomplished—to snatch her back into yet another dysfunctional family unit. The first casualty of that precipitate move is Rosamond's relationship with Rebecca, who can no longer imagine a life—a shared one with Rosamond, anyway—without Thea. Rosamond's life becomes for many years after that an achingly solitary affair. Via episodic encounters with both Beatrix and Thea—who becomes for Rosamond something of a talismanic figure, betokening life possibilities long foreclosed to her—the isolated cousin sees her childhood friend's most savage aspect. After one especially charged mother-daughter encounter—involving, of all things, a damaged summer blouse—Rosamond is moved to speak up on the victimized girl's behalf, only to have the deranged Beatrix turn on her in no less savage fashion: "I know you, Rosamond. I know what you are. Don't think that Thea has never told me: what you used to get up to, with *that woman*. When you were meant to be looking after her."

And that, as Rosamond might say, was that: the cousins remained in cursory contact for the remainder of Beatrix's life, but relations were cold and formal, even for British women of a certain background. Thea lives in a bitter state of exile from her mother and develops a self-protective profile of chilling emotional indifference, which Rosamond notes with characteristic precision: "I looked at her, searching, again, for signs of emotion—joy, affection, discomfort, *any* kind of *feeling*, in short—but I could see nothing. There was no light in her eyes, nothing behind them, no spirit animating her at all."

That's the maternal legacy that Thea bequeaths to Imogen, with truly calamitous results. But one is ultimately less struck by Imogen's misfortune than with the solitary course of Rosamond's later life. Often, she confesses, she finds herself grasping back at the never-repeatable domestic bliss of the surrogate family's French camping adventure: "If I felt an ache, a *yearning* to be in Thea's presence again, was that because, unselfishly, I wanted to help her, or because my own life was so empty and loveless?"

The answer comes later, resoundingly on the latter score, as Rosamond explains to Imogen the efforts of her and her later life partner—a warm but passionless painter named Ruth—to adopt the 3-year-old girl after the state had separated her from Thea. "The thought of having you, Imogen, joining us, living with us, coming to love and depend upon us (and how much you *would* depend on us, now that you had been so cruelly incapacitated)—it was almost too wonderful to contemplate.... We would give you everything your mother had never had. And in this way, perhaps, across the generations, the scales of justice might somehow be balanced."

It's to Coe's credit that he doesn't let his otherwise enormously sympathetic narrator shrink from voicing the way that a child's misfortune can become the occasion of something "almost too wonderful to contemplate." And it's also a singular achievement of *The Rain Before It Falls* that Coe can leave the bruising verdict behind such a wish unstated: that the dogmatic denial of family ties can be just as disfiguring as their dogmatic strictures. In this way, Rosamond brings to mind another aching, proper—though altogether more prickly—British exile from family life: Barbara Covett, the slyly vindictive antiheroine of Zoë Heller's *Notes on a Scandal*.

Rosamond also brings to mind the esteemed roster of Virago writers Coe kept plainly in view as he wrote this book. She shares a first name with Rosamond Lehmann (no relation to your humble correspondent), a Virago author who stoked "a literary love affair that has lasted for more than two decades," Coe wrote in his Virago appreciation. As it happens, Lehmann's best-known work, *The Ballad and the Source*, concerns the "story of the relationship between a mother, her daughter and her granddaughters, in which betrayal, manipulation and emotional histrionics are shown to have a cumulatively destructive effect across the generations," Coe writes. Moreover, Rosamond Lehmann had a sister named Beatrix—best known as an actress featured on the BBC cult sci-fi series *Dr. Who* but who was also a published Virago author. Beatrix's icy, petulant mother is named Ivy—and Ivy Compton-Burnett, another Virago writer, specialized in novels largely made up of icy, petulant intrafamily dialogue. Coe even goes out of his way to put Rosamond and Beatrix on the set of a Shropshire film production of a 1950 film called *Gone to Earth*—a real-life project, directed by Michael Powell, based (yes) on a novel of the same name by Virago writer Mary Webb.

But the nicest bit of name-based wordplay in the novel concerns Rosamond's niece. One of Rosamond Lehmann's cruelest reviewers was *The New Yorker*'s Brendan Gill, who as Coe notes, complained that a later Lehmann novel, *The Echoing Grove*, "was flawed because it attempted to blame women's troubles on men, when the real problem (apparently) was something called 'destiny'; but 'women, especially women writers,' he said, 'have no use for destiny; they wouldn't compose a *Hamlet* if they could.'"

One of the central themes of Rosamond's narration, however, is an affirmation of destiny. In what turns out to be very nearly her dying words, she recalls the lakeside idyll in France, and tells Imogen: "It was all leading, I realize now, to the day by the lake—*that* was the culmination.... Everything after that was wrong. When Beatrix came back, to take Thea away, that was when the world tilted, went out of shape." Even so, she has told Imogen that the wrongness of all these years of family torture also contains a saving—if contradictory—truth:

> Everything I know about Beatrix and her family, from my first encounter with them at Warden Farm in 1941, through her bad marriages and her accident and her neglect and mistreatment of Thea, and then the way your mother grew up feeling unwanted and worthless and incapable of emotion, and all of these things, all of these things that were so *wrong*, all these unsuitable relationships and bad choices.... Yes, it was true, none of them should ever have happened, they were all terrible, terrible mistakes, and yet *look what they led to*. They led to you, Imogen!... There is such a rightness about you. The notion of your not existing, never having been born, seems so palpably wrong to me, so monstrous and unnatural.

Coe is too good a novelist to let this be the final word on Imogen, who has her own chastening rendezvous with destiny: a shocking, brutal episode that—of course—nearly mirrors a formative trauma of her mother's childhood. And that makes the literary background to the taut, unsparing vision of *The Rain Before It Falls* just that—background. Even so, it is surely no accident that Coe constructs its action so that a character named Rosamond is patiently, emotionally and (please note, *Hamlet* fans) dramatically instructing a character named Gill in the true workings of destiny. It's also no small consolation, amid the bleak portraits of a family's lethally arrested emotional life, to savor some long-overdue gender-themed literary payback. ■

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The Age of The Wooden Spoon

by BENJAMIN LYTAL

COURTESY FARRAR, STRAUS & GIROUX

Knut Hamsun as a Chicago train conductor, 1886

For more than 400 years—"twice two hundred years of darkness," in Henrik Ibsen's phrase—Norway was ruled by Denmark. Then in 1814, as a consequence of the Napoleonic wars, Norway was ceded to Sweden. In the shake-up, Norwegian self-interest flourished, a Constitution was drafted and Swedish authority was violently opposed, though briefly. And while Sweden would manage Norway's foreign policy for almost another 100 years, Norwegian nationalism never cooled down. With its politicians defeated, its patriots were often writers, men who could persuasively speak for Norway, drawing on backwoods folklore against the urbane culture of Danish Copenhagen. They gathered folk tales, debated the merits of a uniquely Norwegian written language and wrote idealistic poems and novels about peasant life. The Swedish king had prohibited recognition of Norway's Constitution day, but on May 17, 1829, poet Henrik Wergeland led a celebration that made its anniversary a popular national holiday.

Beginning in the 1860s, the chief of these writers was Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, a stout orator with a large face, mutton chops and a hawklike crest of hair. He penned the national anthem in 1864 and took his service to his country seriously. When he died, in 1910, the Norwegian press loudly wondered who could succeed him. But they already knew. Even the *New York Times* reported, in 1911, on this self-conscious search for a new great man, which by then had produced its result: Knut Hamsun.

Hamsun proved to be a disaster. In 1920 he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature; but by 1933 he had declared his support for Hitler, and he continued to do so during and after his country's occupation by Nazi forces in 1940. He was a black sheep, a genius—sure of his talent but also paranoid, insecure and incurably cocky. As Robert Ferguson explains in his invaluable biography *Enigma*, Hamsun waded into the most sensitive debates—on infanticide, freedom of speech and eventually Nazism—with bellicose editorials that took his national stature, and the inviolability of his ideas, for granted. He wanted none of the responsibility that came with his laurels; he never stopped being the rebel. Though he began to cultivate Bjørnson shortly before the latter's death, he had spent most of his career antagonizing him. As late as 1904, he published damning articles in the Norwegian press. "You have become old, master. If only you had not become old.... Age thinks it becomes wiser and wiser; but the truth is that Age becomes more and more stupid." The same could have been said to Hamsun in 1940.

Hamsun made great men his business—for a Norwegian writer, this was inevitable. As a very young man he already had Bjørnson's model in mind, even combing his hair back in a three-inch wave that resembled the elder writer's snow-white pompadour. Hamsun was also a great critic of Victorian hero worship, but he was neither like Lytton Strachey, content to prove Florence Nightingale and Cardinal Manning hypocrites on their own terms, nor like Oscar Wilde, happy to draft figures such as Jesus Christ or Lord Byron into his unlikely causes. After the breakthrough of *Hunger* (1890), Hamsun risked his nascent reputation with a lecture series that tried to tear down the idols of Norwegian culture—Bjørnson and the expatriate Ibsen. What Hamsun hated about these men was their solemn belief in their own responsibility.

Hunger
By Knut Hamsun.
Translated by Sverre Lyngstad.
Penguin. 206 pp. Paper $14.

Hunger
By Knut Hamsun.
Translated by Robert Bly.
Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 243 pp. Paper $15.

Mysteries
By Knut Hamsun.
Translated by Sverre Lyngstad.
Penguin. 313 pp. Paper $15.

Pan
By Knut Hamsun.
Translated by Sverre Lyngstad.
Penguin. 131 pp. Paper $13.

Growth of the Soil
By Knut Hamsun.
Translated by Sverre Lyngstad.
Penguin. 328 pp. Paper $13.

Benjamin Lytal writes a column on fiction for the New York Sun. *He has just completed his first novel.*

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Ibsen took it upon himself to open the doll's house and rethink women's roles; Bjørnson championed the peasants in one decade, and in the next he took on the church. But Hamsun, a nihilist already, threw social responsibility out of literature; from the beginning, he was a champion of no one but himself.

Hamsun's mature career began onstage. On December 11, 1887, in Minneapolis, where he was living, Hamsun began a series that would showcase his hard-won knowledge of modern literature, lecturing on Balzac, Flaubert, Zola, Bjørnson and Ibsen. As Ferguson writes, one witness remembers that Hamsun's clothes were frayed; his pants were too short, and his jacket was tightly buttoned, as if to hide an unsuitable shirt:

"Often he bit his lip, started as though in surprise, and then a salvo of passionate phrases would come literally tearing out of his throat." He wasn't yet ready to betray the older generation, but he did make special mention of the young Swedish playwright August Strindberg, claiming that he was "no great thinker" but merely "a great original genius"—a distinction that self-taught Hamsun would lean on in the future as a mandate.

It must have been sweet, lecturing on European literature to a Sunday crowd, when the previous winter he had been conducting streetcars in Chicago, insulating his uniform with newspaper, doggedly reading Aristotle between stops. Hamsun had originally come to America on Bjørnson's recommendation, hoping to become the voice of a growing Norwegian community there. But this hope had been frustrated, and Hamsun fell back on hard labor and odd clerkships to survive.

After a few weeks of earning his keep by minding pigs, Hamsun gave a final lecture, held on Norwegian National Day, May 17, 1888, devoted to attacking America, as his biographer Ferguson surmises. Hamsun resented democracy, calling it mob rule, and viewed the American Midwest as a land of poverty and rootlessness. At this time Hamsun was wearing black ribbons that indicated sympathy for the anarchist victims of the Haymarket massacre. His first symbolic quarrel with the establishment was political.

His next was aesthetic. To write *Hunger*, the book he began later that year, Hamsun had to give up on being the next Bjørnson. He wrote about being hungry not only because he had good material but because he decided that suffering brought psychological insights a Bjørnson would never have. And Hamsun's first implicit break with Bjørnson emphasized their class differences: Bjørnson had made a tour of America, and was welcomed in many towns with a brass band; he never got his hands dirty, as Hamsun had. In a scandalous lecture series in Copenhagen, Hamsun told his own truth about America. The wildly nonfactual, antidemocratic book he published afterward, *On the Cultural Life of Modern America*, included this motto: "Truth is neither objectivity nor the balanced view; truth is a selfless subjectivity." From the beginning, political recklessness and Modernist subjectivity were fused. Hamsun actually fantasized that Bjørnson would denounce the series—and that Nietzsche's great popularizer, Danish critic Georg Brandes, would then come to the aid of Hamsun, the young profaner.

Bjørnson remained aloof—but Hamsun had found his voice. He would be both self-pitying and self-aggrandizing. "It was in those days when I wandered about hungry in Kristiania, that strange city which no one leaves before it has set its mark on him…." So he begins *Hunger*, with an ellipsis. He then switches to the present tense, waking up, so to speak, in his own novel. He finds himself in a cheap attic room, starving at 6 AM, so hungry that a newspaper ad for bread starts to swell before his eyes.

The *Hunger* narrator was one of the first in a parade of alienated moderns beginning with Baudelaire and Raskolnikov and continuing with Rilke's Malte Laurids Brigge and Beckett's Molloy. He crosses and recrosses the city of Kristiania (Oslo), chasing odd loans and sleeping on benches, writing in cemeteries and then suddenly rushing off on an imagined errand. The novel is set not so much in the city as in the narrator's mind. It's divided into four almost interchangeable parts, the only rising action being the narrator's deepening debts. At the end of every section, he gets some money—but by the beginning of the next, he's broke.

Brandes, the critic Hamsun most wanted to hear from, confessed that he found the book "monotonous." A reader today might disagree: Beckett and Camus have taught us to read similar tales with far less incident and overt emotion than Hamsun unselfconsciously provides. But he felt he had to defend himself: "I have avoided all the usual stuff about suicidal thoughts, weddings, trips to the country and dances up at the mansion house. This is too cheap for me. What fascinates me is the endless motion of my own mind."

At a cerebral level, the *Hunger* narrator enjoys his crises: "I had passed over into the sheer madness of hunger; I was empty and without pain and my thoughts were running riot." But occasional euphoria is incidental to the narrator's soaring stubbornness about his situation. So many chances slip through his fingers—he puts the wrong date on an important job application; he turns up his nose at a loan; he bypasses a homeless shelter's free morning meal in order to maintain the illusion that he is an important journalist who stayed up all night at an expensive club and lost his key. Everything becomes a test of pride.

Hunger is available in two recent English editions. Sverre Lyngstad's translation forms the initial number in an ongoing project, including eight novels so far, that gives us a unified English Hamsun for the first time. The other edition, a reprint of Robert Bly's 1967

Tonight No Poetry Will Serve

Saw you walking barefoot
taking a long look
at the new moon's eyelid

later spread
sleep-fallen, naked in your dark hair
asleep but not oblivious
of the unslept unsleeping
elsewhere

Tonight I think
no poetry
will serve

Syntax of rendition:

verb pilots the plane
adverb modifies action

verb force-feeds noun
submerges the subject
noun is choking
verb disgraced goes on doing

there are adjectives up for sale

now diagram the sentence

ADRIENNE RICH

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translation, benefits from Bly's ear for rhythm. Bly has "All of this happened while I was walking around starving in Christiania," which is far more natural than Lyngstad's "It was in those days when I wandered about hungry in Kristiania." But Bly smoothed out Hamsun's tense changes and otherwise erred on the side of fluidity. By retaining Hamsun's awkwardness, Lyngstad preserves the deep personality of his narration. Throughout his work, Hamsun takes a very free hand with things like tense or a narrator's supposedly limited omniscience—he writes with an unruly impulsiveness that is both untutored and eerily masterful. This was notably appreciated by Kafka, who, having noticed a less convincing pattern of flaws in another author, referred to Hamsun's work, saying that "there it is as natural as the knots in wood."

After *Hunger*, Hamsun let loose. He attacked Bjørnson and Ibsen directly, finally. These two masters had often created controversies of their own—on social issues. Hamsun was more interested in aesthetics and in his obvious ambition. Speaking to provincial audiences and finally to a sold-out Kristiania hall that had Ibsen in the front row, Hamsun insisted on amoral individuality and subjectivity at any cost. "I will make my hero laugh, where sensible people think he ought to cry...and why? Because my hero is no character, no 'type' who laughs and cries according to the theories of some School, but a complex, modern being."

Hamsun had a strange way with embarrassment—it seemed to fortify him, to confirm his sense of self—and that, as much as his ambition and his revolutionary aesthetics, contributed to his combative career as a public intellectual. Even in private, whenever possible, he did the indiscreet thing. As a young man, when writing to his early patron Erasmus Zahl, Hamsun dated his letter on Norwegian National Day, as if he was already a national treasure. And with Zahl's money in hand, he moved to the small coastal town of Østensjø, bought new clothes and a pretentious lorgnette, chased the girls and started writing letters to the regional newspaper that attacked local hymn-singing practices. In America, once he had his foot in the door of a Unitarian minister's sophisticated home, he decided he would go barefoot. And as an old man on a rare holiday , he explicitly refused to tip the staff at a grand Nice hotel. Only just as he and his family were packing to go did he hand out wonderful bonuses.

Just so, in *Mysteries* (1892) Hamsun's hero, Nagel, shows up in his bright-yellow suit, catching a Northern coastal town in

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the middle of its own dramatic grind, just when the local beauty's suitor, Karlsen, has killed himself. Nagel gets in line—pursuing Dagny, the beauty, and contemplating death by prussic acid. But unlike the romantic Karlsen, who solemnly quotes poetry in his suicide note, Nagel is self-deprecating and presumptuously absurd. He represents the modern artist's insecure relationship with his bourgeois public. Everywhere he goes, Nagel frantically charms and then gives offense for good measure. Arguing as usual against Tolstoy and Kant, Nagel utters some of the most incriminating lines of Hamsun's early career: "No, the voice of *my* blood says that *he* is the greatest who has contributed most fundamental value, most positive profit, to human existence. The greatest one is the great terrorist, a towering magnitude, an unheard-of universal jack that balances planets." But more important than these lines is the way *Mysteries* crystallizes Hamsun's relationship with his public, offering a loving parody of the conceited ironist who by definition must be misunderstood.

Hamsun liked Mussolini before he liked Hitler; he liked a strong man and a simple solution.

After *Mysteries*, Hamsun moved to Paris. He was poised to become a world writer and an expat, but the relevant role model, August Strindberg, had been sharply disappointing. Hamsun took his early theories of character from Strindberg, but in person he found the Swedish playwright too easy to dominate. Moreover, Hamsun couldn't get the hang of French. To finish his next important novel, *Pan* (1894), Hamsun decided he would abandon the cosmopolitan world.

It is very moving to realize that *Pan*, a return to form but also a return to Norway, to the Arctic coast that would shelter Hamsun's increasingly insular career, is probably his most beautiful book. As was becoming a pattern, Hamsun sets the tone with a gesture of recollection: "I've thought and thought, these last few days, about the endless day of the Nordland summer," his narrator, Lieutenant Glahn, begins. Glahn has moved north to hunt and to have some peace, but Edvarda, daughter of a local merchant, turns his head, queering his idyll. For a few weeks he's filled with a fey happiness:

> Gladness is intoxicating. I fire my gun and an unforgettable echo answers from crag to crag, floats out over the sea and rings in some sleepless helmsman's ears. What am I glad about? A thought that comes to me, a memory, a sound in the forest, a human being. I think of her—I close my eyes and stand still on the road and think of her, counting the minutes.

Pan is a poetic book, broken into mini-chapters that open onto sudden glimpses of life: "Maybe at this moment I behold the interior of the earth's brain," Glahn muses from a seaside cliff, "how it labors, everything seething!" *Pan* was a homecoming and a release. Hamsun reconciled himself to Norway and found a way to write a good book that was not provocative. Edvarda matches Glahn and contains him; she would have stopped Nagel in his tracks—a woman who embodies Hamsun's theory of literary characters. "One cannot always be the same," she hedges, when Glahn accuses her of cold indifference.

But Hamsun's *oeuvre* after *Pan* hugs the Nordland shore, returning again and again to tales of wanderers and star-crossed lovers, all of them inspired by the pale air of warm Arctic nights. Hamsun continued to write about taciturn, complicated men, but his books were more mysterious than revolutionary—more than a whiff of their strange atmosphere is contained in Per Petterson's recent masterpiece, *Out Stealing Horses* (2003).

In other words, Hamsun had completed his aesthetic experiments by the time he became famous. His ambitions were complete. In some ways, he mellowed—he moved to the country and occasionally wrote family-friendly novels on commission. But he clung to the reckless self-confidence that had made him famous; it was what he had to give. When Bjørnson died in 1910, Hamsun inherited his mantle on literary merits, but the timing was good for Hamsun to dabble in politics. When World War I began, he made a point of siding with Germany—where he had been translated early and celebrated. And at the war's end, he published an epic celebration of *Blut und Boden* that took the world by storm.

Though it opens with an archetypal man clearing a path through the wilderness, *Growth of the Soil* (1917) firmly belongs to Hamsun's unmistakably modern voice, rendered in a prepossessing new translation by Lyngstad. Isak, Hamsun's idealized farmer, "never read a book," but the voice that brings him to life is a seasoned literary creation: part village gossip, part agrarian visionary and always naggingly ironic. "Oh, that Inger [Isak's common-law wife]—he loved her, and she loved him in return; they were frugal folk, living in the age of the wooden spoon and doing well." The age of the wooden spoon passes, personal troubles come and go, modern farm equipment arrives, but Isak stays the same: placid, built like a barge and barely human. The reader waits and waits for disaster to strike, but Isak seems to be blessed by economic destiny. It is soothing to watch as his farm steadily grows, but it also feels like an intellectual indulgence. Out of artistic necessity, Hamsun introduces Geissler, a mercurial wanderer and authorial stand-in, who teaches Isak irrigation and generally makes up for his lack of self-awareness. "The country is supposed to have thirty-two thousand men like your father," Geissler says to Isak's son. "I've figured it out."

Hamsun had taken it upon himself to plan Norway's future. He envisioned an agricultural renaissance. Isak was his new model for a genius, even more unlettered than Hamsun. Hamsun's Modernist beliefs had made him a Luddite, an enemy of rationalism and a lover of anachronism. He liked Mussolini before he liked Hitler—he liked a strong man, a simple solution. He had long held a racist prejudice for the so-called Germanic race, but his anti-Semitism was an odious afterthought to his interest in fascism. He came out for Hitler early and stubbornly refused to reconsider, despite his misgivings about German rule in Norway. Granted a personal meeting with Hitler, Hamsun complained about Josef Terboven, the *Reichskommissar* in Norway, infuriating Hitler—but also revealing Hamsun's naïve assumption that Hitler could be reasoned with. Still, Hamsun maintained his public position. As Ferguson makes clear, Hamsun was not senile. But he was isolated, both physically and mentally. He built not just his career but his life on standing alone, and the dimensions of his final imbroglio did not scare him into changing.

Nonetheless, there is nothing inspiring about Hamsun's political views. It would seem useful to discount biography, to take his books on their own. But seldom are biography and literature so obviously interwoven. In his 1945 psychological deposition, while on trial for treason, Hamsun noted that his characters are "split and fragmented, not good and not bad, but both at once, subtle, and changeable in their attitudes and in their deeds. No doubt I am also like this myself."

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Yet it was his tenacity in so many things—in choosing Hitler, in making his artistic claims, in pontificating from the stage—that defined Hamsun. Had he ever settled in America or Paris, he might have been able to fade away, or he might have had peers capable of saving him. As it was, in 1935, Thomas Mann bragged that he had thought of writing Hamsun to warn him off Hitler but had decided "it would lead too far." If Mann had done so, and somehow succeeded, literary history would be slightly different. As it is, *Hunger* and *Mysteries* and *Pan* are still in print, in good translations, and as long as they are, Hamsun's abhorrent politics will still be relevant. ■

SHELDAN C. COLLINS/COURTESY WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

An installation view of Ruben Ochoa's *An Ideal Disjuncture* (2008), left

Unlovable

by ARTHUR C. DANTO

There has been oddly little excitement, let alone controversy, surrounding the Whitney Biennial this year. No one told me that it must be seen, no one said how awful it was. People wondered if the show had become obsolete, especially in late March, when Europeans thronged to New York City to see the Armory show and its galaxy of satellite art fairs—Pulse, Red Dot, Bridge, Scope New York and the rest. Why would anyone leave the glitter of these seductive displays to visit what was generally understood to be a drab exhibition that billed itself as a survey of where American art stands today? In any case, there would be plenty of American artists at the fairs who had already made the cut at one commercial gallery or another. I knew but a small handful of the eighty-one artists listed in the Whitney's press release, and few of those I did know were near the top of my list of favorites. (Some of them were near the top of my list of artists to be avoided when possible.) I could tell that this was mainly to be a show of "emerging artists"—the kind sought by enterprising collectors, funding agencies, younger curators and galleries out to make a name for themselves. Since the fairs were full of emerged, emerging and about to emerge artists, many just hatched from their MFA shows, it was hard to figure out what could be special or different about Biennial 2008.

Part of my indifference may have stemmed from the fact that the curators, Henriette Huldisch and Shamim Momin, had broken with tradition by not designing their Biennial as an *exposition à thèse*. In an interview in March, they emphasized that they had set out with no particular ax to grind, resolving just to "start with the art" and see how things fell out. In this they differed from the curators of Biennial 2006, who from the beginning were determined "to make a bold curatorial statement about the current zeitgeist."

The current show certainly did not evoke in me the kind of negativity that the Whitney, not that many Biennials ago, decided was part of the territory, advertising that particular edition with the slogan "Love It, Hate It, Don't Miss It"—based, I suppose, on the famously confrontational 1993 Biennial, which featured flat metal entry badges

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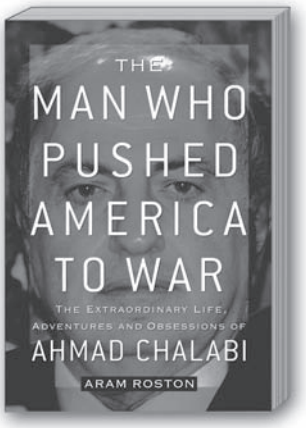
CHALABI



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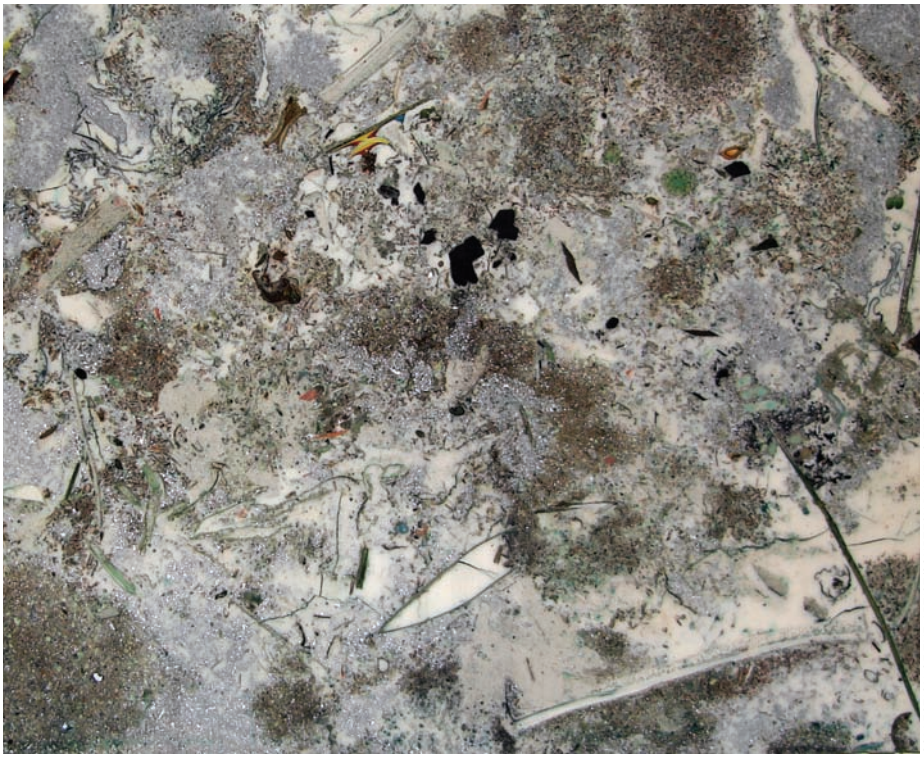
Actual size is 1.25 inches in diameter.

by Daniel Joseph Martinez that read, in whole or in part, "I can't imagine ever wanting to be white." Martinez is among the established artists Whitney curators like to add each year to the mix of mostly younger and lesser-known artists on view. This year they've included one of his installations, *Divine Violence*. It consists of 125 painted memorial tablets, each with the name of an organization—like Al Qaeda, or somewhat more explosively, the CIA—dedicated to violence as a means to specific political goals. The panels, executed in gold-flake automobile paint, compose a kind of columbarium—a memorial to certain terrorist organizations, not all of which are, as we say, "history." Does the format imply that they are destined to be history? The piece is ambiguous, but Martinez—whom I consider a friend—is a restlessly provocative activist artist who has stayed the course that nearly all of the Biennial-93-ards were on.



COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST/COURTESY D'AMELIO TERRAS

A detail of Jedediah Caesar's *Dry Stock* (2007)

Thinking back on the Biennials I have seen since 1985, I cannot say that I have ever loved any of them. I cannot blame the artists, who make what they make. I expect that means the target of my loathing has really been the curators and their windy art-world prose. I don't know the 2008 curators, but the show's themelessness strikes me as successfully representative of the reality they were required to deal with. The art world is themeless today. It is heading in no direction to speak of. My guess is that Martinez embodies a direction many young curators—and some not so young—feel it should point to. But that is due to the chamber radicalism that continues to define art professionals as a class, dealing as it does with elitist matters.

I would not go so far as to say I liked the show, but I did like what I think of as the show's mood. It reminded me of my first visit to Williamsburg, Brooklyn, where a gallery scene emerged in the 1990s concurrently with the gentrification of SoHo and the upscale art world's colonization of Chelsea. Two German artists, Kirsten Roolfs and Wolfgang Petrick, had settled into Williamsburg and offered themselves as guides to the most interesting spaces. The art was not much, but compared with the messy art that I had encountered in the East Village in the mid '80s, in the midst of the Neo-Expressionist bubble that everyone hoped (if they did not actually believe) was the miraculous return of Abstract Expressionism, it was thoughtful, even philosophical. What mainly impressed me, however, was the appearance, among the artists as well as the gallery personnel, of a new artistic culture: everyone wanted to be helpful; no one was in your face. I remember one gallery filled with colorful toy telephones, collected on the artist's travels, presented as a single work. There was a spirit of play and innocence in every show I saw. Everyone was eager to please. Even the receptionists could not have been more receptive. I mentioned my observation to one of the gallery

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directors, who was not long out of college. "I guess," he said, "that we all want to remain children down here."

That remark captures the mood of the 2008 Biennial. I have to qualify this judgment, though, because on the fourth floor, just to the right of the elevator bank, I had a somewhat magical experience that may have colored the entirety of my visit. (In a way, it is unfair to include it in what means to be a review, since the likelihood of any of my readers having the same experience is almost nil.) There were four or five largish sculptures, the most interesting of which was an assemblage of urban fragments, mainly slabs of reinforced concrete and rebar, and a ragged piece of chain-link fencing. It was by Ruben Ochoa, born in 1974, who lives in Los Angeles. Reinforced concrete chunks make for a somewhat unusual medium, and it reminded me of the singular inappropriateness to today's visual art of Clement Greenberg's celebrated theory of medium specificity: each art must strive to determine and make work out of the essential qualities specific to its medium. How could an artist like Ochoa yield to such an injunction? Why should he?

I stopped at his piece *An Ideal Disjuncture*. It looks like bits of a wrecked building, picked over by the artist to make an ephemeral piece of art before it was all carted off to a landfill. As I was pondering its meaning, a troop of private school students, all girls, were led in by their teacher. They circled the piece and then, all in white blouses and black skirts, settled on the floor to discuss it. What could it be, and what was its meaning? Eavesdropping, I heard one of the girls answer that maybe it was a grasshopper. The teacher responded by repeating the word as a doubtful question: "A *grass*hopper?" I immediately saw what the girl meant: the chain-link fencing did look like a gauzy wing, the rebar like antennas, and another fragment took its place as the monumental insect's thorax: a gigantic grasshopper made of urban detritus! What a lovely thought! It lifted my spirits immediately—here was art transfiguring commonplace junk into something rare and strange! And here was a young mind struggling to give form and meaning to unprepossessing matter. She somehow expressed the spirit of many of the artists in the show.

In the same gallery I saw Heather Rowe's sculptures, which resemble sections of what one might call "housing starts"—beams supported by two-by-four studs, giving you the initial sense of a not-quite-finished partition. They mirror elements of the gallery's architecture, but they're not quite integrated into the rest of the space, and they're ornamented in ways not altogether consistent with their being housing starts: Rowe has fitted the partition with odds and ends of Sheetrock, mirror fragments and scraps of shag carpet. So they occupy two worlds at once, contained and container—free-standing walls for the collector with plenty of space.

In the adjacent gallery were some attenuated sculptures by another Angelino, Charles Long, made from "scavenged river junk and silt, papier-mâché, and plaster over steel armatures," which take their forms from blue herons' droppings traced by the artist. They exemplify what the artist calls the "degraded sublime" and evoke Barnett Newman's famous if mean-spirited 1952 put-down: aesthetics, in relationship to art, is, like ornithology, "for the birds." The impulse, again, was to make art out of degraded matter, which struck me as promising to be something of a theme, given that so much of what I encountered was recycled vernacular material, made into art that sometimes bears affinities to paradigms of Modernist art—in the case of Long, according to the catalog text, "Constantin Brancusi, Isamu Noguchi, or Theodore Roszak." Art redeems nature at its basest.

It is in this spirit that another Californian, Jedediah Caesar, accumulated detritus from daily life—plywood scraps, pieces of paper and cloth, bottles and shards of china, worn garments—which he fused together with resin and cut into blocks. They are things of beauty, natural analogues to geodes or pieces of amber in which insects or bits of vegetable matter are encased. And they are artistic analogues to the sculptures of the Neo-Objectivist Arman, who made plastic replicas of objects from the real world—gears, for example, or pairs of glasses—and encased them in plastic. They are also something like the environments Louise Nevelson created out of discarded pieces of wood—spindles, paddles, finials, baseball bats—whose final form had a beauty that far surpassed that of the component parts.

Each of these scavenged pieces has some degree of craft, but there is also ready-made art worth considering. William E. Jones projects some found surveillance film, shot in 1962, of men fellating or masturbating one another in a public men's room. It is unedited or barely edited found footage. In this respect, it is not unlike the Rodney King video that was shown in an earlier Biennial. Still, as Marcel Duchamp wrote in mock defense of his 1917 urinal under the name "R. Mutt," Jones has "given a new thought" to footage originally made in the spirit of entrapment. As viewers, we are to

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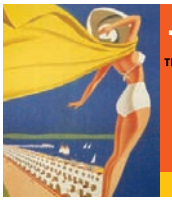

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infer the thought while watching men of an earlier era engage in somber furtive sex.

Huldisch's catalog essay—Momin's is unreadable—borrows its title from Samuel Beckett: "Lessness." The subtitle is hers: "An Art of Smaller, Slower, and Less." It is not a criticism of the art she and her colleague have found, but rather a characterization:

> There is a sense of weariness of grand proclamations and braggadocio—a preference for the historical footnote, perhaps, rather than the totalizing story—that is unsurprising in an environment where, as of very recently, contemporary art no longer appears to have any enemies, and the oppositional gesture itself runs the risk of amounting to little more than a self-congratulatory pat on the back.

It sounds as if the artists compose a community of Prufrocks rather than of Lord Hamlets:

> If we find ourselves in a scenario marked by the experience of loss, by doubt, or by a fundamental absence of certainty or meaning, it is not pessimism, detachment, or irony that defines the moment but persistence and belief—belief in staking out small areas of meaning and agency, however futile or absurd it may seem at times, and going on, for better rather than for worse.

This is well said and wise. It is not quite true of the established artists she and her colleague have selected, however: Matt Mullican constructs whole cosmologies; the late Jason Rhoades, featured on the ground floor, sought to fill all the space he could get with less than ideal disjunctions of disparate things and substances, in praise of impossible lubricities. And perhaps the work Huldisch and Momin encountered dates the larger-than-life productions of artists whose work is the cynosure of billionaire collectors, themselves out of phase with the times. Perhaps the "smaller, slower, lesser" art the curators have assembled explains why their show is finally so likable—or so unhateable—and how it may, in the end, even point a direction for the nation in its present straitened state, with a shambled economy and exhausted armies. Where our art stands today is not a bad way to think of where America might stand tomorrow: smaller, slower, lesser, with freedom and justice for all. Hey—it's time for a change! ■

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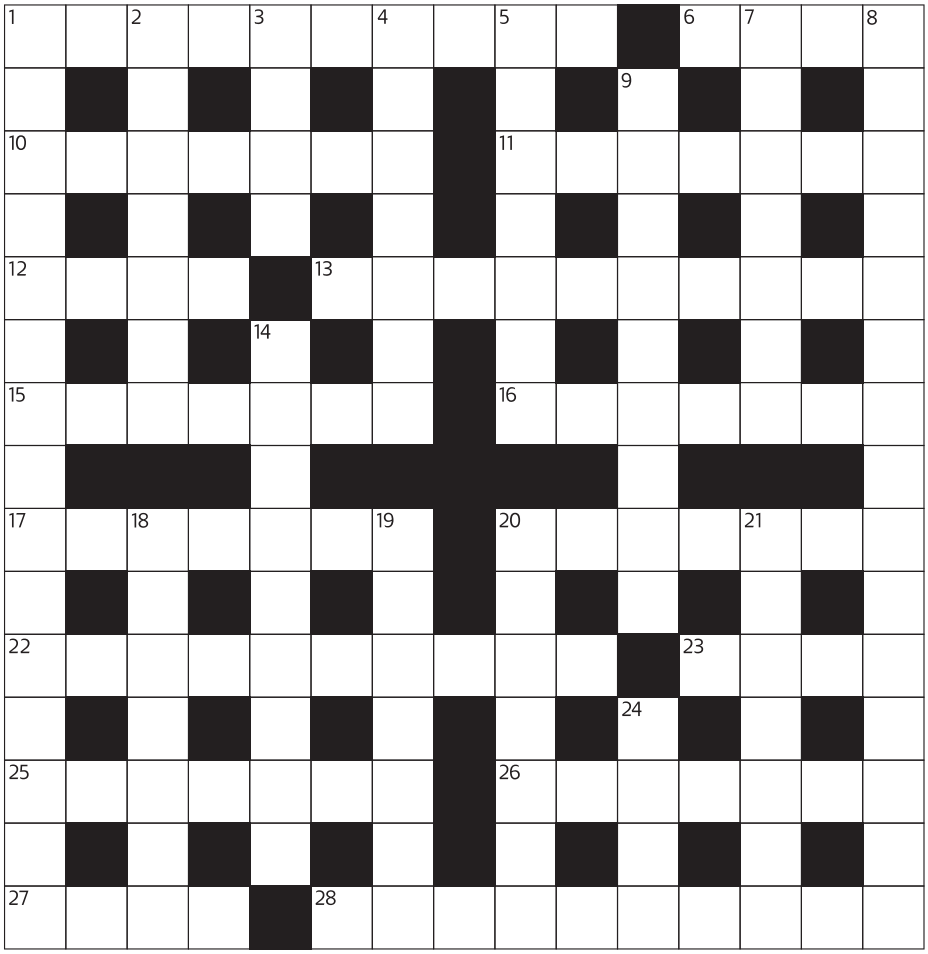

ACROSS

1 The final battle needs a weapon—old, like Quixote. (10)

6 Badly need a garden spot? (4)

10 One who is new on the job, with the following having a couple of failing marks. (7)

11 Something pretty in the garden has a point near the end, which is rather uncontrolled in character. (7)

12 A starburst, darn it… (4)

13 … for one who might be used to starbursts! (10)

15 Supported by a bit of stage ware, having a classical foot here. (7)

16 With a certain amount of irony. (7)

17 Inside—sometimes outside—material. (7)

20 Any vertebrate of the reptile, bird and mammal class, but the main sort has a broken toe. (7)

22 Starts good with those who are hearing things that are the shining type. (10)

23 Things laid down at the track, possibly. (4)

25 Got mad about what they did to the clams? (7)

26 An Indic language, used by Franklin, such as Sal, and myself. (7)

27 A forward movement when the favorites return. (4)

28 What one peels with steady and astute watchfulness. (7,3)

DOWN

1 They think about the origins of man, being people who make excuses about the North, in a way. (15)

2 Intended to show up the first person objectively with a worker type to finish it. (5,2)

3 A thousand to one that it's disappeared! (4)

4 Being such, has a habit such as a soldier gets right. (This up is spit and polish; down is punishment.) (7)

5 Turns something to show a different surface. (7)

7 Dear me! It's wrong, yet gets right asleep if you are one— (7)

8 —and little Clara was a 7 in this. (10,5)

9 Suggesting a meaning, and being in such a little state got in wrong to make it. (9)

14 See 24

18 Possibly vain, and a nice season in Paris shows a certain amount of simplicity. (7)

19 How some meetings break up with a bad act having a point to pass on. (4,3)

20 Behave in a way, when about to steal a type that belongs in the circus. (7)

21 A bad poet is all mixed up about age. What a way to run things! (7)

24 and **14** How many stories start, formerly not down—no, up—and a mite different. (4,4,1,4)

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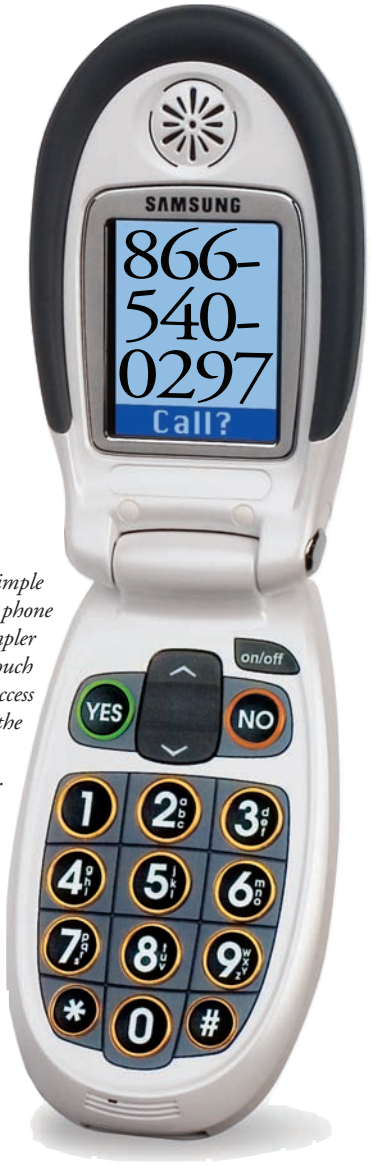

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"As a professional restorer of antique and classic watches for major museums, I recently reviewed the movement and individual parts of the Stauer Luna29 Moon Phase timepiece. The assembly and the precision of the moon phase movement are rarely seen."

—George Thomas
Towson Watch Company

It Took Us Many Moons to Get This One Right

Engineers build a timepiece with a rare moon phase movement at a price that is truly heavenly.

Even though the moon has no hour or minute hand, it has its own internal clock. But for watchmakers, engineering a clock to measure both lunar and earthly time has been only accomplished by a select few craftsmen. Our new moon phase movement might have been one small step for Stauer, but it's one giant leap for the watch collector. The ***Luna29 Moon Phase*** is a true breakthrough in innovation at a stellar price.

Recently an important Moon Phase watch sold at auction for over $125,000, but we think that we can save you about 99.8% with a watch that is more than 99.995% accurate. Those are numbers that add up pretty well. So if you want to know the precise time or find out when the next full moon is so you can navigate your sloop through the changing tides, Stauer has got you covered.

Since earthly time is measured at regular 12 month intervals, the moon's month is at odds with our calendar. A lunar month is 29.53 days, so a moon phase watch needs to keep time in two totally different ways. Antique watch collectors highly value this rare type of complex movement.

The understated vintage design of our *Luna29* timepiece belies the complexity of the movement. This design combines the time-honored tradition of multi-function watches that are setting record high prices in the most distinguished auction houses. The watch was designed with assistance from Hartwig Balke, a renowned watch engineer. The present watch boasts a combination of three rare complications: a standard monthly calendar, a day of the week indicator and the moon's phases are graphically depicted. The impressive coin edged case, layered in 18k rose gold, pays tribute to the firm's legendary neoclassical designs. To the best of our knowledge, only six other boutique watchmakers can build the complex moon phase movement.

This is the first time the present example has been offered directly to collectors. It is among Stauer's most iconic multifunction wristwatches. Our engineering team indicates that fewer than 2,500 examples can be produced from the current mold. The timepiece underwent four main evolutions, each introducing a new innovation on the precise engineering.

If you are not thrilled, you may return the timepiece within 30 days for a full refund of the purchase price. This is a limited edition of 2,499 pieces, so please don't wait. This kind of watch only comes around once in a blue moon.

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